

AUGUSTA
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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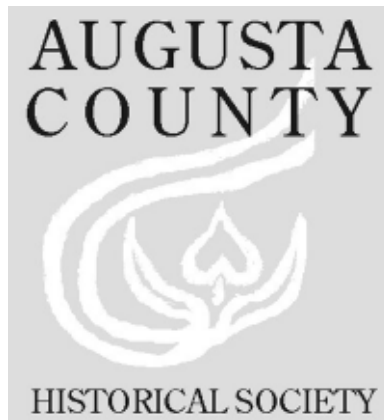


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Augusta Historical Bulletin: Editorial Policy

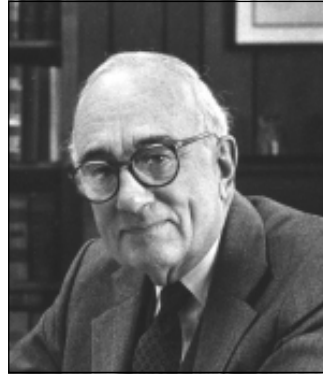
The editors of the *Augusta Historical Bulletin* welcome submissions relating to any topic or period in the history of Augusta County, Virginia, and its wider environs. Submissions may take the form of articles, research notes, edited documents, or indexes to historical documents. Other formats might be acceptable, but prospective authors of such submissions are encouraged to consult with a member of the editorial board. With rare exceptions, the *Bulletin* does not publish manuscripts that focus exclusively on genealogical matters. Authors should strive to make their contributions accessible to a broad readership. In matters of form and style, authors should adhere to the guidelines and strictures set forth in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed., or Kate L. Turabian, et al., *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed., both of which are widely available in libraries and bookstores. A style sheet, prepared by the editors of the *Bulletin*, is available upon request. Authors should submit four double-spaced copies of their manuscripts, with endnotes where applicable, and include photocopies of any illustrations. Upon acceptance of the manuscript for publication, authors must provide an electronic copy of it, as well as publishable-quality illustrations.

Manuscripts or requests for style sheets should be sent to: The Augusta County Historical Society, Attention: Bulletin Editors, P.O. Box 686, Staunton, Virginia 24402-0686. Please try to submit proposed manuscripts by June 1, 2011. Queries may also be sent to: Nancy Sorrells (lotswife@comcast.net) or Katharine Brown (klbrown@cfw.com).



Justice George Moffett Cochran 1912-2011

It is with deep sorrow that the entire membership of the Augusta County Historical Society marks the passing of one of Virginia's most respected and humble gentlemen. Possessing a keen awareness of the history of his beloved community of Staunton and Augusta County as well as that of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Justice George Moffett Cochran now settles into the historic halls of Virginia's greatest statesmen. He served his nation as a wartime commander in the U.S. Navy,



and then his state in the Virginia General Assembly as a Delegate and as a Senator before being appointed to the Supreme Court of Virginia where he sat until his retirement. As one of the Assembly members known as "The Young Turks" he helped guide the Old Dominion through the tumultuous Civil Rights Era. Despite the oftentimes loud voices advocating destructive public policy, the steady guidance of those Young Turks put Virginia on the path of modern governance that we all enjoy today.

In 2006, readers of the *Augusta Historical Bulletin* were privileged to find in that issue Justice Cochran's recollections of one segment of those trying years when he served on the 1959 Perrow Commission. In "Virginia Facing Reality" he detailed how that commission helped the state break free of its long-standing tradition of racial discrimination in the public school system.

The Augusta County Historical Society will remember him for his tireless work for the society and the associated historical institutions of the area. He and his wife, Lee, became members of the society within a year of its formation in 1964 and have been stalwart supporters since then. They helped support the society in its move to the R.R. Smith Center for History & Art to share the space of a renovated nineteenth-century hotel with Historic Staunton Foundation and the Staunton Augusta Art Center.

The Cochrans' generous endowment of the Alexander H.H. Stuart Speaker Series, named after Justice Cochran's ancestor who was among Virginia's most celebrated statesmen of the time, brings fascinating history topics and lively historical discussions to audiences at the Smith Center.

In recent years, the Cochrans enjoyed Augusta County Historical Society trips to Washington, D.C., to follow the trail of Abraham Lincoln and have a behind-the-scenes tour of the National Archives, and also to the Ohio Valley to visit the Point Pleasant Battlefield where his ancestor and other Augustans played a vital role in Dunmore's War, and Parkersburg, end of the famous turnpike that Alexander H.H. Stuart helped secure. In 2009, the society honored Justice and Mrs. Cochran with its highest distinction, the History Service Award.



Justice Cochran, ninety-eight, died Saturday, January 22, 2011, at his Staunton residence. He was born April 20, 1912, in Staunton, a son of Peyton and Susie (Robertson) Cochran.

He graduated from the University of Virginia (B.A. 1934, LL.B 1936). He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and the Raven Society. He served as president of the University of Virginia Law School Alumni Association and as a trustee of its Law School Foundation. After two years with a law firm in Baltimore, he returned to practice law in Staunton. He served on active duty with the United States Navy from 1942-1946, where he rose to the rank of Lt. Commander. On returning from the Navy, he practiced with his father Peyton Cochran until 1964 when he was a founding partner of the law firm of Cochran, Lotz and Black. He served as President of the Virginia Bar Association 1965-1966, and as a member of the Constitutional Revision Commission of Virginia 1968-1969. He was a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, a Fellow of the American College of Probate Law, a Charter Fellow of the Virginia Bar Foundation, and a member of the Judicial Council of Virginia.

George Cochran served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1948-1966 and during his last term was chairman of the Courts of Justice Committee. He served in the State Senate 1966-1968. He was chairman of the Woodrow Wilson Centennial Commission of Virginia, a member of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University 1960-1968, a trustee of Mary Baldwin College 1967-1981, a trustee of the Virginia Historical Society and a member of the Board of Trustees of Stuart Hall for thirty-one years, during which he served as chairman for seventeen years. He is a former chairman of the board and founder of the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia. For many years he served on the vestry and at the time of his death was a trustee of Trinity Episcopal Church.

He was a member of the Board of Directors of Planters Bank and Trust Company, Staunton, Virginia, from 1947 to 1969, and as President of the Bank from 1963 to 1969.

Justice Cochran was appointed to the Supreme Court of Virginia by Governor Mills E. Godwin, Jr., qualifying on October 1, 1969, and was subsequently elected and re-elected by the General Assembly. Justice Cochran retired from the Court on April 20, 1987. He and his wife received the Outstanding Virginian Award in 1995.

In addition to his beloved wife, Lee Stuart Cochran, of sixty-two years, family members include two sons and daughters-in-law, Moffett and DuPre Cochran of New Canaan, Connecticut, and Stuart and Emily Cochran of Staunton; four grandchildren, Carter Cochran and his wife, Jodie of Charleston, South Carolina, Alexander Cochran, Peyton Cochran, and Lee Cochran, all of New York; and two great grandchildren, Caroline and Kate Cochran.

A memorial service was conducted at 3 p.m. Tuesday, January 25, 2011, in Trinity Episcopal Church, Staunton, by the Rev. Dr. Paul Nancarrow, the Rev. Dr. John D. Lane, and the Rt. Rev. A. Heath Light, D.D.



John Holladay Latané: Staunton's Forgotten Defender of Wilson's Ideals

By Dr. Kenneth W. Keller

Editor's Note: Dr. Kenneth Keller, professor of history at Mary Baldwin College and a past president of the Augusta County Historical Society, once again shares some of his historical research with Bulletin readers. Here he compares the ideologies of two of Staunton's native sons.

John Holladay Latané (1869-1932) was a widely known American historian born in Staunton, Virginia. He became a respected scholar and widely published writer whose life had many parallels to Woodrow Wilson's, and whose views were, like Wilson's, based on an idealistic understanding of the role of America in the world as a promoter of democracy, free government, and economic opportunity. By the 1930s, his many writings were read all over the United States, and his college textbooks in American history and foreign relations instructed a generation of students who became leaders in law, medicine, and teaching. His books today are largely unused, and his name is forgotten in his hometown. Why would the memory of such a prominent scholar have faded so dramatically?

Latané's fame has declined, but not because of his close identification with Woodrow Wilson, a leader whom he supported and admired. There were many parallels between Wilson's career and Latané's. Both were born in Staunton and both were sons of ministers. Woodrow Wilson was the son of Joseph Ruggles Wilson, pastor of First Presbyterian Church, and Latané the son of James Allen Latané, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church between 1857 and 1871. Although Latané was the son of an Episcopal priest, the pull of Reformed Protestantism was very strong in his life. His father left Trinity Church for a parish in Wheeling, West Virginia, which he served for only three years, but then left the Episcopal Church to join in forming a new denomination, the Reformed Episcopal Church, a body that stressed a Calvinistic interpretation of both the ministry and the sacraments—although with bishops.¹ John H. Latané fol-



lowed his father into the Reformed Episcopal Church, and by the end of John Latané's life in 1932, he had become a Presbyterian, and, like Wilson, an elder.²

Both Wilson and John H. Latané had long, productive careers as historians and scholars of government. After Latané's preparatory education in Baltimore, as an undergraduate he attended The Johns Hopkins University, where Wilson was one of his teachers. Wilson read Latané's senior thesis on the early boundary disputes between Maryland and Virginia.³ Both men were elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Both Wilson and Latané received a Ph.D. degree from Johns Hopkins and then began an academic career at a number of institutions, including a women's college. Wilson taught at Bryn Mawr, Wesleyan, and Princeton; Latané at Randolph-Macon Woman's College (1898-1902), Washington and Lee University (1902-1913), and Johns Hopkins (1913-1932). Both became academic administrators: Wilson became President of Princeton in 1902; Latané, was Dean of the Faculty at Hopkins (1919-1924).

Both Wilson and Latané were Democrats committed to reform of government, society, and economic life and an increased role for the United States as a world power that promoted democracy and human rights across the globe. Latané was a gifted public speaker and addressed meetings in support of Wilson's policies from the earliest days of Wilson's short political career.⁴ Wilson began his life in politics in 1910 when New Jersey Democrats named him as their candidate for governor of New Jersey. Reading of Wilson's entry into politics in New Jersey, Latané wrote to Wilson and reported that there was strong enthusiasm for his candidacy at Washington and Lee University, where Latané taught at the time. Although Latané never held political office, he strongly advocated Wilson's policies, especially concerning international affairs and the League of Nations, Wilson's great hope for the redemption of the world from war. Wilson also urged the lowering of tariff duties and the smashing of trusts and other monopolistic combinations of big business. Latané's support of the Democratic Party continued after Wilson's death.

Although Latané never became involved directly in national political activities, he did contribute his expertise to municipal reform, a major goal of progressive era reformers, by serving on a commission to draft a new charter for the city of Baltimore in 1917.⁵



John Holladay Latané was a nationally known historian and expert on foreign relations born in Staunton. (Ferdinand Hamburger Archives of The Johns Hopkins University)

Latané's leadership of reform efforts was more confined to work in higher education and the history profession. These attempts, reminiscent of the crusades of early twentieth century progressive reformers' campaigns, began in a 1910 article in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* in which he excoriated early twentieth century American collegiate education and demanded a tightening of standards to eliminate frivolity and restore intellectual life.⁶ By 1916, he and a group of other historians led an attack on a few renowned scholars' monopolistic domination of the American Historical Association, the principal professional organization of the history profession. With the historian Frederic Bancroft, Latané wrote a progressive-style

pamphlet entitled *Why the American Historical Association Needs Thorough Reorganization*. They maintained the organization was controlled by a narrow clique of corrupt officials who were squandering the dues of the membership and controlling elections.⁷ Like Wilson, Latané was convinced of the righteousness of his cause.

There were other parallels between Wilson and his student. Staunton natives Wilson and Latané were born in the South but left the precincts of the old Confederacy as their careers took them to academic positions. Wilson's studies and career at Princeton led him to New Jersey and then to Washington, while Latané's major academic work took place in Baltimore. Neither was a "professional southerner" who made much of his southern connections. Neither Wilson nor Latané was descended from the so-called "first families of Virginia." Wilson had Scots-Irish and recent English roots, and Latané was descended from an early eighteenth century Huguenot



pastor who had been ordained an Episcopal priest and then emigrated to Essex County. Both Wilson and Latané married southern women. Wilson, the first southern president since Andrew Johnson, brought a distinctively southern tone to his administration by appointing many southern Democrats to high office, including the Cabinet, and instituting racial segregation of federal office buildings in Washington. (Wilson's friendship with Thomas Dixon, author of the racist novel *The Clansman*, is well known as well as his praise for the equally racist film *Birth of a Nation*, which was based on Dixon's novel.)⁸ Occasionally a racist tinge crept into Latané's writings, as when he used the words "credulous darkies" to refer to African-American freedmen in his *History of the American People* (1930) or his description of Asians as "yellow races" in the same work.⁹ Latané's family had somewhat more famous roots in southern lore than Wilson, since his uncle, William Latané, 9th Virginia Cavalry, C.S.A., was killed in J.E.B. Stuart's 1862 raid around George McClellan's Army.¹⁰ Uncle William became the subject of John R. Thompson's poem "The Burial of Latané" and the inspiration for a graphic icon found in many homes of the post-bellum South, a sentimental steel engraving of the interment complete with grieving women and faithful slaves.

Although their parents had left Staunton for other ministerial assignments when the two men were infants, they did not forget their connections with their hometown; both visited Staunton on several occasions after their careers took them elsewhere. In 1912 President-elect Wilson came to Staunton to visit with supporters and speak on the steps of the administration building of Mary Baldwin Seminary. John H. Latané visited the Seminary in 1920 to speak to students, and in 1927 Latané collaborated with his sister Miss Edith Latané, a faculty member at the Seminary until 1926, in writing an American history for young people.¹¹

The ideals that Wilson espoused were also the standards that Latané valued in his numerous publications about history and international relations. Since Latané was a student of foreign relations, Wilson's views concerning American relations with other nations were Latané's primary concern. Wilson believed that America should pursue "equal justice" in relations with all nations. It should renounce aggression, secret diplomacy, private discussions, and the notion that there could be one "single dominating interest or class" in interna-



The poem and the image of the "Burial of Latané" was an iconic post-Civil War South image. The print shows the burial of William Latané, 9th Va. Cavalry, C.S.A., the uncle of John Holladay Latané. William was killed in J.E.B. Stuart's ride around McClellan's Army in 1862. The engraving commemorates the role of southern women during the years of the Confederacy. (The Virginia Historical Society)

tional relations. He wanted to see an end to the idea of the balance of power, in which dominant nations and empires should have roughly equal power in foreign relations. Alliances were also things of the past that did not belong in the redeemed world he sought. There should be "mutual respect among all nations" and nations should keep their promises. Isolation should end, nations should use physical force only in the "interest of humanity," and the "civilized nations of the world" should unite in a world organization in the interest of "humanity."¹² Latané was too good a scholar to believe these objectives could be easily implemented, but his application of them as goals shows clearly in his writings.

In dozens of publications, John H. Latané argued for American relations with other nations based on Wilson's ideals. Both Wilson and Latané believed in the principle of equal justice in relations with



all nations. Republican William McKinley's decision to take the Philippines when Spain lost its 1898 war with the United States made the United States enter the eastern Pacific arena and would, according to Latané, lead to Japanese resentment. He insisted that "the Philippines are a serious handicap to American diplomacy."¹³ When Republican Theodore Roosevelt engineered a revolution to separate the Republic of Panama from Colombia to allow the building of a canal at favorable terms to the United States, Latané did not approve. "Big Stick" diplomacy, bullying Latin American states, and the Canal that resulted from it were violations of the principle of fair treatment that would damage U.S. relations with Latin America. Latané wrote "The manner in which we acquired the Panama Canal Zone produced a very bad effect throughout Latin America."¹⁴ Wilson and Latané preached that larger nations should not bully smaller ones, but, in Latané's view, Theodore Roosevelt insulted the Japanese by compelling the Japanese to accept a peace treaty with Russia in 1905 that yielded territory to Russia and failed to grant a Russian indemnity to Japan for damages endured in the Russo-Japanese War.¹⁵ Latané also objected to William Howard Taft's 1911 treaty with the Japanese forbidding Japanese immigrants from owning agricultural land in certain parts of California because such discrimination damaged Japanese pride.¹⁶ Both professors insisted that nations should keep the promises they make in treaties. Latané noted that an act Congress passed under President Taft in 1912 discriminated against Great Britain in the amounts of the tolls Britain would have to pay to use an isthmian canal; such a measure violated a 1901 treaty the United States had made with the British.¹⁷ Latané's disaffection with American policies changed, however, when Wilson and the Democrats came to power in 1913.



Woodrow Wilson was a graduate student in history at The Johns Hopkins University from 1883 to 1886. (Famous Americans—CD-ROM and Books, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2005)



Latané's advocacy of Wilson's ideals went into high gear when the dispute over the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles occurred in 1919. The Treaty included the organization of a League of Nations and a few Wilsonian principles derived from Wilson's statement of U.S. aims in World War I known as the "Fourteen Points." The Republicans in the Senate demanded fourteen amendments or reservations to the Treaty before they would approve its ratification, but Wilson would accept no modifications to the Treaty, which he had already signed in 1919. Wilson ordered the Senate Democrats to vote against the ratification of the Treaty modified by reservations, and the entire proposal was defeated. To Latané the treaty was Wilson's "great achievement," and the Republican rejection of the Treaty without modification was a "fruitless victory." Latané believed that the Republican-controlled Senate had usurped the president's constitutional power to make foreign policy.¹⁸ He maintained that Wilson's goals were to promote "self-determination" through the treaty and to take America out of isolation as a member of the community of nations.¹⁹

Further Latané blasts at Republican policy occurred in the 1920s over the secrecy of the negotiations for naval disarmament treaties in 1922 rather than agreements drafted in "the full glare of publicity," as Wilson advocated.²⁰ Latané also opposed ungenerous G.O.P. insistence that the French be compelled to pay the money they owed to the United States from loans the U.S. had made before American entry into World War I.²¹ Calvin Coolidge's 1926 dispatch of American marines to Nicaragua to intervene in a political dispute between the Sandinistas and the government of President Diaz also received Latané's condemnation.²² There are many other examples of Latané's support of Wilsonian policies and principles besides these, but the points cited here show sufficiently his identification with his old teacher's views.

It was well known that Latané had a high regard for Wilson. Latané's 1932 obituary said of him that he was "an intimate and ardent supporter of Woodrow Wilson, champion of the League of Nations, the World Court, the Monroe Doctrine, and an opponent of prohibition."²³ Some of Latané's best writing discussed Wilson and the President's aspirations for the United States and the world. The text *History of the American People* (1930) contained several warmly admiring passages about the late President's moral leadership.²⁴ To



Latané, Wilson's virtues were more admirable than those of the "aggressive" Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson's political opponent whose detestation for Woodrow Wilson was no secret. Wilson and Latané were equally hostile to T.R. and his policies.

Latané's approval of his teacher's thought and policies could not be more respectfully stated than what he wrote in a letter to President Edwin Alderman of the University of Virginia, who asked Latané for his thoughts on Wilson as Alderman prepared in 1924 to address a joint session of the United States Congress after Wilson's death. Wilson's former student noted in his letter to Alderman the "great qualities" of Woodrow Wilson. Wilson had "intellectual independence and courage of conviction" and believed that "compromise is repugnant with genius." According to Latané, Wilson also had "faith in the force of ideas" and "a courageous faith in the persistence of ideas and ideals and in the future of mankind." Wilson also had faith in democracy that was greater than the interests of any political party, a humanitarian spirit that allowed him to view "mankind as a whole. His vision was a world vision." Latané predicted that "future generations" would remember Wilson's drive for the League and would forget about the "United States Senate that blocked for a few years the entrance of the United States into the League."²⁵

It was not because of Latané's identification with Wilson's ideals that Latané's reputation went into eclipse. There are still many political leaders and authors who use the rhetoric of Woodrow Wilson to justify foreign policies designed to make other nations "democratic," or to intervene in distant places to promote the self-determination of peoples. The modern criticism of large business combinations and of the manipulation of "other people's money" also sounds quite Wilsonian, and Latané would have wholeheartedly supported such critiques. Although politicians and statesmen sometimes invoke Wilsonian ideals today, historian Latané is not studied today either as an exponent of Wilson's ideas or as a historian. Why might Latané's name be known only in some history graduate schools today?

John H. Latané was an exponent of what is called today "contemporary history." He believed that historians had an obligation to write about current issues that arose from the past and that captured the attention of the present generation of diplomats and foreign policy makers. He would have endorsed "relevance" as a goal



for the best history writing. Latané's developing interest in current international issues probably came about because of the debacle of the defeat of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. He assisted in the creation of a new institution dedicated to the study of international relations at Johns Hopkins, the Walter Hines Page School of International Relations. In 1930 Latané left the Hopkins history department to serve on the staff of the Page School with its focus on contemporary issues of foreign policy.²⁶ But focusing on contemporary international issues has several pitfalls. First, the only documents available for studying recent political and diplomatic decisions tend to be official papers. The private memoirs, diaries, secret backroom agreements, and gossip are not yet available, and the long-term unintended consequences of such decisions may not yet be apparent. In many of Latané's published works, he focused on issues important when Latané wrote about them, but subsequent events that overshadowed these topics made his writings about them less useful to historians.

One of Latané's major books, *America as a World Power*, published in the prestigious American Nation Series in 1907, describes in the detail the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection. Other topics include arbitration treaties, immigration, and plans for an isthmian canal, but the 1907 book avoids the growing arms race in Europe which drew America into world power status more than any of the issues Latané's book discusses.²⁷ The book is almost entirely based on official records and reports and published documents of the United States government. Historians today would insist on examining the archives of all the countries involved before publishing. Because of Latané's growing conviction that history writing had to be "relevant" to current issues, Latané was often the first to publish about a currently important topic, but the rush to publish deprived him of the advantages of hindsight and the understanding of how events of greater importance than the topics he studied arose from these decisions. His *History of the American People*, published in 1930, went to press as the Great Depression was happening, but the Depression is not mentioned, although he does notice Herbert Hoover's declining popularity. Many of Latané's writings are valuable as journalistic reports, but they do not have the significance of historical writing that lasts. Latané's work on international relations also succumbs to his tendency to tell his reader what the na-



tion should do about a particular issue; historians today see their job as reconstructing the past without finding in it moral lessons that are supposed to change current behavior. Because Latané had a tendency to publish for the here-and-now and to publish prescriptions for foreign policy dilemmas, his works lose significance when the here-and-now itself becomes history. Today they have historical significance only to a limited range of specialists in the history of diplomacy.

In addition to being prone to write contemporary history before it was ripe enough to analyze, Latané's own efforts to deal with American history reflected older pre-occupations and assumptions of the historical profession which are less appreciated today. Latané contributed several sections to the volumes on *The South in the Building of the Nation* (1909), a 13-volume series published in Richmond by historians sympathetic to the South. Latané's chapters on Virginia from the Revolution to secession, the diplomacy of the Confederacy, and the Civil War and "southern economic development" emphasize military, diplomatic, and traditional political history. His account of the coming of the War stresses that the political power of the South had won national battles over the tariff, westward expansion, and the public lands, so that "with the elimination of these issues, the attack of the North was concentrated on the single issue of slavery and assumed the character of a moral crusade."²⁸ His brief treatment of these topics minimizes race and slavery as a psychological problem and emphasizes congressional politics. Present-day historians would say his view is too simple. Instead of seeing the Civil War as a result of "sectionalism" and the conflict between competing northern and southern economies as Latané did, the emphasis in Civil War history written today is on the impact of race and racism in the origins of the conflict. Latané is generally objective in his treatment of the causes of the war, but his own tendency to think stereotypically about race has led him to ignore a key part of the story of the central problem of the American past.

Latané's book *A History of American Foreign Policy* (1927) concentrated on a description of the crises, treaties, and diplomats in American foreign relations with little analysis of American cultural origins, psychological motivations, or social implications of American foreign policy initiatives that present-day historians of the same subject would be sure to discuss.²⁹ Latané's *History of the American*



People emphasizes also traditional military, diplomatic, and political history as well. Historians today understand their subject much more broadly: history involves the relations of groups of people who have not exercised military, diplomatic, or political power in the past. Modern scholars seek to include women, African-Americans, non-English speaking immigrants, workers and poor people, and sexual minorities in their treatment of the American past. They study voting behavior and the role of ideology and popular culture in bringing about great events like the Civil War. He, like many others of his generation, including Wilson, accepted the idea of progress as a key to understanding the past and charting the future of the United States; current historians tend to avoid the topic. A strong emphasis in Latané's work is the notion that frontier democracy was at work in creating American government, nationalism, free enterprise, and the social order, an idea promoted by fellow Hopkins Ph.D. Frederick Jackson Turner, who got his Ph.D. five years before Latané at the Baltimore institution. By the time Latané began his teaching career, Turner's frontier hypothesis was becoming the dominant way of explaining the American past. Today's American historians generally reject Turner's theory. Latané even advocated a providential view of American westward expansion that supports the idea of Manifest Destiny, that it was God's will for the United States to spread across the North American continent. National expansion was "perfectly natural" for the United States. The only reference to imperialism in the entire book, a widely used text in American colleges before the New Deal, is as a criticism levied against American policy by Latin Americans. Imperialism is part of the current historical vocabulary for most scholars. All these and other preoccupations of Latané's historical works have made his writings curiosities of a specific time and place in the American past, artifacts that might be studied in their own right, as one might examine an old document or an ancient map.

Endnotes

¹On Rev. James Allen Latané, John Holladay Latané's father, see "Latané, James Allen," in Rossiter Johnson, ed., *The Twentieth Century Biographical Directory of Notable Americans*, vol. 6 (Boston: The Biographical Society, 1904). James Allen Latané became the Presiding Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church in 1883.

²Arthur Walworth, *Woodrow Wilson*. rev. ed. (Baltimore, Maryland: Pelican Books, 1965) and John Morton Blum, *Woodrow Wilson and the Politics of Morality* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956) are good one-volume biographies of Woodrow Wilson. On Latané, see Harris E. Starr, ed., "Latané, John Holladay," *Dictionary of American Biography. Supplement*



One. To December 31, 1935, vol. 21 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), 483-484. The most recent standard American biographical encyclopedia, *American National Biography*, contains no article on Latané. See also *Cyclopedia of American Biography*, vol. 23 (New York: James T. White, 1933), 394; Lyon G. Tyler, ed., *Men of Mark in Virginia—Ideals of American Life*, vol. 4 (Washington, D. C.: Men of Mark Publishing Company, 1908), 240-241; "In Memoriam," resolution of the Maryland Historical Society, January 11, 1932, in Special Collections Department, Leyburn Library, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. John Holladay Latané married Margaret Junkin Cox, a widow, of Lexington, Virginia. See Latané's obituary in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 2, 1932, 4, 16. He is buried in Lexington.

³Arthur S. Link, ed. *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, vol. 9 (1894-1896), 252-253.

⁴Latané spoke to a student group at Washington and Lee University during Wilson's 1912 campaign for the presidency and declared "This is an age when it is a joy to live, and be a Democrat." *Ring tum Phi* [Washington and Lee University student newspaper], March 5, April 9, 1912. See also Arthur S. Link, ed. *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson—(1910)*, vol. 21, 613.

⁵The progressive era took place between about 1900 and 1920. High-minded reformers advocated changes in politics to eliminate corruption and promote more direct democracy, reforms to break up anti-competitive business combinations and establish regulation of the economy, and social reforms to promote improvement of the everyday lives of women, children, and the poor.

⁶John Holladay Latané, "Problems of the American College." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (January 1910): 1-9.

⁷Frederic Bancroft, John H. Latané, and Dunbar Rowland, *Why the American Historical Association Needs Thorough Reorganization* (Washington, D.C.: National Capital Press, 1913). Bancroft wrote most of the pamphlet, but Latané drafted a set of reforms that would eliminate "boss-and-ring rule." (See pamphlet, p. 15.) The pamphlet indicates the rebels were younger historians who challenged the domination of the Association by historians from the Ivy League, the Carnegie Institution, and the Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin.

⁸Nicholas Patler, *Jim Crow and the Wilson Administration—Protesting Federal Segregation in the Early Twentieth Century* (Boulder, Colorado: The University Press of Colorado, 2004), 54-67, 70 (n26). Wilson met Dixon at Johns Hopkins, where Dixon had entered the Ph.D. program. Dixon left after a year, but struck up a friendship with Wilson. On Wilson and Dixon, see "Thomas Dixon," David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman, eds., *Encyclopedia of Southern History* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 366. According to Arthur Link, Wilson's attachment to the South was not strong. See Arthur S. Link, *The Higher Realism of Woodrow Wilson* (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 3-37. Link says that Wilson had "an extravagant and romantic love for the South, which increased in direct ratio to his absence from the region" and that Wilson remained "a southerner on the race question." See Link, *Higher Realism*, 281.

⁹John Holladay Latané, *The History of the American People* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1930), 492, 616.

¹⁰On William Latané and *The Burial of Latané*, see Rossiter Johnson, ed., "Latané, James Allen."

¹¹Mary Watters, *The History of Mary Baldwin College—1842-1942* (Staunton, Virginia: Mary Baldwin College, 1942), 265-273, 341, 383.

¹²Saul K. Padover, ed., *Wilson's Ideals* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), 7, 11, 16, 70-74, 81, 96, 104, 111. See also Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson—Revolution, War, and Peace* (Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan-Davidson, Inc., 1979), 1-20. Arthur S. Link, *The Higher Realism of Woodrow Wilson* (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 3-37.

¹³John Holladay Latané, "Our Relations with Japan," *American Political Science Review*, 8 (1914): 599.

¹⁴John Holladay Latané, "The Effect of the Panama Canal on Our Relations with Latin America," *American Academy of Social and Political Science. Annals*, 54 (1914): 87-88. Latané also objected to Theodore Roosevelt's revision of the Monroe Doctrine known as the Roosevelt Corollary (1904) which authorized America unilaterally to exercise "an international police power" in cases of "wrongdoing or impotence."

¹⁵Latané, "Japan," 590-591.

¹⁶Latané, "Japan," 597.

¹⁷John H. Latané, "The Panama Canal Act and the British Protest," *American Journal of International Law* 7 (1913): 19-22. The Treaty Latané believed Congress had ignored was the



Hay-Pauncefote Treaty with Britain (1901).

¹⁸John Holladay Latané, "The Constitution and Foreign Relations," Third Cutler Foundation Lecture (Williamsburg, Virginia: The College of William and Mary, 1931), 24-25.

¹⁹John Holladay Latané, *From Isolation to Leadership—A Review of American Foreign Policy*. rev. ed. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1923), 198; "Constitution," 25.

²⁰Latané, "Constitution," 26; "Isolation," 267-268.

²¹John Holladay Latané, "Why the French Debt Should Be Cancelled," *American Academy of Social and Political Science. Annals*. vol. 126 (1926): 46-48.

²²Latané, "Constitution," 31.

²³Latané's obituary in the *Baltimore Sun*, January 2, 1932, 4, 16.

²⁴Latané, "History," 737, 740.

²⁵Letter of John Holladay Latané to Edwin A. Alderman, Alderman Papers, April 15, 1924, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Virginia.

²⁶Index to the Minutes of the Board of Trustees, no. 875, The Ferdinand Hamburger, Jr., Archives of The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

²⁷John Holladay Latané, *America as a World Power—1897-1907*, The American Nation: A History, vol. 25 (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1907).

²⁸See Latané's "The Commonwealth of Virginia, 1776-1861," vol. 1: 90-113; "The Diplomatic Relations of the Confederacy," vol. 4: 525-544; "The Civil War and Southern Economic Development," vol. 5: 656-668, in Julian A. C. Chandler et al., eds., *The South in the Building of the Nation* (Richmond, Virginia: The Southern Historical Publication Society, 1909). The quotation is from "Southern Economic Development," 668.

²⁹John Holladay Latané and David W. Wainhouse, *A History of American Foreign Policy*. 2nd rev. ed. (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1940). This publication came out initially in 1927, five years before Latané died. Latané was planning to revise it at the time of his death on January 1, 1932. The first 22 chapters of the edition used here are Latané's along with the largest portions of 16 that follow. Professor Wainhouse wrote the remainder of the book.



'I Was Really Proud of Them': Canned Raspberries and Home Production During the Farm Depression By Dr. Ann E. McCleary

Editor's Note: Dr. Ann McCleary is an associate professor of history at State University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Georgia. Her doctoral dissertation focused on the home demonstration club movement in Augusta County from 1917 to 1940.

Nineteen-year-old Mary Cupp must have been thrilled to see her photograph appear prominently on the front page of the April 1933 *Virginia 4-H Club Letter*. In the photograph, under the caption "Mary Cupp, Augusta County, has an excellent canning record for five years," she stood proudly with her hand on a modern pressure canner, the tool that enabled her to accomplish her award-winning work. A collection of seven quart and pint glass jars filled with the products of her labors encircled the canner. Although the contents in the fancy-packed cans cannot be clearly distinguished in the photograph, the jars appear to contain peaches, cherries, peas, perhaps raspberries, and other fruits and vegetables all carefully and artistically arranged and marked with attractive round labels for proper storage.

Mary dressed appropriately for her 4-H work in a sleeveless cotton dress, with a narrow belt and wide collar. Although the photograph is not in color, it appears that the dress was white, the preferred color for home economists and thus 4-H demonstrators. Mary, whose slight smile but still serious pose suggests her pride in her accomplishments, pulled her long dark hair back into a bun, a sanitary measure essential for the modern girl working with food.

The April *Newsletter* does not include any additional information about Mary or her accomplishments, but an article entitled "Balance the Canning Budget" follows below in the same column.¹ The photograph likely appeared in reference to an article published two months earlier, in the February 1933 issue, entitled "Mary Cupp Wins B. & O. Scholarship." The article praised Mary for five successful years of 4-H work which earned her the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-

Edna Bullock

VIRGINIA 4-H CLUB LETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE CLUB DEPARTMENT, EXTENSION DIVISION, VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

OL. XV BLACKSBURG, VA., APRIL, 1933 No. 1

NATIONAL 4-H CLUB MEAT ANIMAL LIVESTOCK PROJECT CONTEST 1933

Demon of Prizes: Mr. Thomas E. Wilson

1. Boys' side 4-H club members working under the supervision of the extension service who are in good standing with records p-to-date and who are enrolled in one or more meat animal livestock clubs (baby-beef, pure-bred beef animal, market hog, roasting hog, market sheep or breeding sheep) during the year 1933 are eligible to compete.
2. Reports of all contestants are to be made on standard report forms furnished by the National Committee on Boys' and Girls' Club Work.
3. A county winner's report shall include the following:
 - (a) Standard report form filled in by the club member and approved by a county extension agent and the state club leader.
 - (b) A narrative report of about 750 words written by the club member telling what his 4-H club experience has meant to him.
4. State winners in the National 4-H Club Meat Animal Livestock Project Contest are required to submit the following:
 - (a) A standard report form filled in by the member and approved by a county extension agent and the state club leader.

4-H CLUB INITIATIONS POPULAR IN CHESTERFIELD

The 4-H clubs in Chesterfield county are working on a unique plan for high quality membership. Before a member can be officially enrolled in a club he must have done at least three months' work, met the requirements of the club project program, had record book up to date, served on the program at least once, been present for one meeting, or not have more than one excused absence. The permanent rolls were made for each club in February. At the time each club held a dignified and impressive initiation service.

A committee of two girls and two boys, the leaders and agents, checked records and determined which members were eligible to receive club pins. These were awarded the initiation. Should a member not measure up to this standard, he must return to the pin. At the end of the club year all club members who have successfully completed projects own their pins.

EXHIBIT OF 4-H CLUB BOOKS

One of the interesting features of the state short course will be an exhibit of 4-H club books made by the girls and leaders. This will give the short course members an opportunity to see the many attractive books that have been made; also a chance to get some new ideas.



Mary Cupp, Augusta county, has an excellent canning record for 5 years

the watch will be awarded to the club member who scored second in the state. One of the two state winners may be selected by the state club leader to compete for the sectional and national prizes.

NOTE II. States in which fewer than 10 per cent of the counties report winners are ineligible to compete for the sectional and national prizes.

Sectional Prizes: Four (4) trips to the

road Scholarship, including four years of clothing and canning projects, two years of garden projects, and one year each of poultry and home improvement. "As a result of her club projects," the article continued, "Mary has saved or earned \$1024.09 and has won trips and prizes valued at \$154.50," bringing the total "saved, earned and won in club work to \$1179.89."

Mary had also garnered an array of other accolades; most recently, she represented all Virginia girls in the national achievement contest held at the December 1932 National Club Congress in Chicago and won second place. In the same February 1933 *Newsletter*, Mary's name appeared a second time in another article detailing the results of the National Hazel-Atlas Contest, where her can of raspberries won second place and an eight dollar prize. By 1933, Mary had "graduated" from high school and thus her 4-H club and she now belonged to the Augusta Young Women's Home Demonstration Club, a junior homemaker club. In her last official year of 4-H work, before reaching the age of twenty, she was serving as president of the Augusta County 4-H Club Council.²

Mary Cupp's canned raspberries illustrate three of the key tenets of home demonstration work, a partnership funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Extension program at



Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and individual counties who matched the federal appropriation for the agent salaries. First, home demonstration work focused on the essential tasks in which farm women were engaged. According to a 1925 study of Oregon farm women, women spent almost half of their work time in food-related activities.³ While specialists and county agents in Virginia could choose from an array of extension curricula, they emphasized programs in food during the 1920s and 1930s in part due to the extension goals but also at the request of local women and girls, who responded by completing projects in significant numbers.

Second, the jar of carefully-packed raspberries symbolizes the tension between old-fashioned values of production and modern ideas of consumption, two central elements of the rural women's world in the 1920s and 1930s. The extension program advocated a strategy that blended both world views; agents urged women to produce the consumer goods they could not afford to purchase. This compromise plan resonated among farm women who valued their productive role on the farm but also wanted to keep up with new trends in consumer goods. At the same time, agents criticized the quality of "cheap" store-bought goods. They believed that farm women should and could produce better-quality goods if they were made by hand with expert guidance from the agents. The goods themselves—such as Mary's canned raspberries—also reflected the negotiation between older rural values and newer consumer ideals. These hand-made, "wholesome" products exemplified the extensions program's new vision of the farm woman: she was conservative yet modern, smart, and savvy.

Third, these modern yet home-made products suggested a new status for the farm woman in American society. While the raspberries could be used, and they probably were, their primary function was for display. Mary created her jars to showcase her talents at a county fair, and when she won, her prize-winning goods moved on to state and national contests. This jar of raspberries was not essential to her family's survival, nor is it likely that Mary would have put that amount of time and energy into these products if they were only to be used at home. Yet participating in these contests helped elevate each club member's position in her community and in the state. Local contest winners gained a reputation broadcast through-



A farm woman and her daughter select canned fruit from their pantry store to take to the market, Rockbridge County, Va., 1942. (National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), College Park, Md.)

out the extension literature and celebrated in contests in Staunton, in Richmond, and eventually in Chicago in front of hundreds or perhaps thousands of ambitious club members like themselves. As the 1926 Augusta County extension work plan proclaimed, "The fair is the show window of the farmer. We recommend that the farmers of the county be encouraged to make exhibits of their best products."⁴ Augusta County women put their best foot forward: the canned goods that Mary and other 4-H club members produced became a powerful symbol of achievement.

Young women living in cities in the 1920s and 1930s would not have spent as much time producing attractive canned goods as their rural counterparts. Middle- and working-class urban women were enjoying the 1920s consumer revolution that allowed them to buy what they needed rather than producing it at home. City and town families purchased an array of new canned foods, which saved time in home canning while also offering a greater variety of foods and a



healthier diet than they had previously enjoyed. As their homes acquired electricity, city women purchased fresh vegetables, fruits, and other foods which they could now keep in their new refrigerators. Although some urban women remained suspicious of the quality of commercially-canned goods, they could afford to buy them. The move toward consumption was well underway.⁵

In contrast, rural households of the 1920s remained places of production. Food preparation provides an excellent example. Robert and Helen Lynd wrote in their classic 1929 study *Middletown* that “cooking occupies a less important place today” in the cities, and they quoted a butcher who bemoaned that “The modern housewife has lost the art of cooking.” City women spent less time preparing meals and families ate together less often. “I ate only seven meals at home all last week and three of those were on Sunday,” recalled one father in this study. Farm women, on the other hand, prepared three meals every day for their large families, an activity which consumed a substantial amount of time. “My mother had to get three big meals a day, and she had hands nearly all the time,” recalled Lucille Berry Masincupp who grew up on a farm in the Spring Hill community. “I don’t know how she got through.” Threshing and other work events further challenged women’s food preparation abilities; Carlyn Wise from Centerville remembered that her mother fed as many as thirty-seven people at threshing time. “You just can’t imagine what it was like,” reflected Bertha Driver Gassett of the threshing and silo-filling days on her family’s Weyers Cave farm. “It kept one of us busy pouring the iced tea, going round the table. They would just eat a *lot*.”⁶

Rural women had few other choices. Farm work still occurred primarily at home, on the farm, and they needed to prepare meals for husbands, family members, and hired hands who labored there. Due to restricted family incomes, they could not afford to purchase some of the new home conveniences and consumer goods that urban women enjoyed. Even if they had the cash, the lack of electric lines in the countryside or running water in rural homes further precluded the adoption of some of the new household technology. Of necessity, farm women “made do,” producing much of what the family needed. When urban women returned to home production in the 1930s to sustain their new standard of living, rural women found the crisis simply a continuation of the hard times they had experienced during



the previous decade.⁷ During these two decades, farm women turned to their daughters for assistance, the same girls that agents targeted for 4-H club work. Oral histories reveal that many middle-class Augusta County farm households still had “hired girls” in the 1920s but that these practices began to wane in the 1930s. National studies reveal that many young girls chose to work outside the home in teaching or other new jobs in retail or office work rather than to labor in another family’s household, where they had less autonomy.⁸ Through the 4-H program, extension agents advocated a more elevated role for young rural women. They encouraged farm girls to provide additional help in their households, essentially suggesting—although not so directly—that daughters should and could compensate for the increasing absence of domestic help. Author Nora Miller wrote in *The Girl in the Rural South* in 1935 that prospects were bleak for a young white girl who often had to remain at home as an “unpaid domestic servant with little time or money for social life and recreation.” To counter this concern, agents utilized the 4-H program to instill a traditional work ethic and a love for country life in the hope that girls would stay on the farm and help build a new rural world full of modern, hard-working farm families.⁹ Through their productive endeavors, women and girls could contribute to the family income by saving money, retain their roles as active economic partners on the farm, and achieve a high standard of living.

Whether on display at the Augusta County fair today or at the December 1932 National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago, an exhibit of home-canned foods is packed with symbolic meaning. The jars that Mary Cupp and her fellow club members submitted for the 1932 national contest suggest the diligence of the producers, who spent hours gathering, preparing, and then canning the fruit and vegetables for the contest. Mary’s friend Edith Berry, who won first prize and a gold “championship” ring for her canned cherries in the small fruits class, had to pick and seed the cherries, prepare the appropriate syrup, and then carefully pack the cherries in the jar and process the cans. Fellow club member Kathleen Roller grew and harvested tomatoes, scalded them in boiling water to slip the skins off, and then cooked and flavored them to produce the tomato preserves that won third prize in the contest. Fifth-place winner Ora Earhart picked strawberries, likely from plants that she raised, and produced pre-



FIG. 4.—Make the sirup and put the jars on to sterilize while the fruit is being prepared

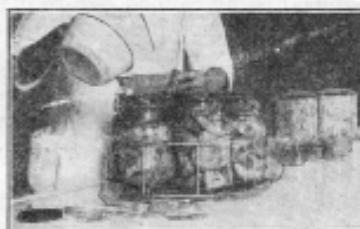


FIG. 5.—Pack the fruit in the jars and cover with boiling sirup



FIG. 6.—Or precook the fruit and fill it into the jars boiling hot



FIG. 7.—Place the rubbers in position and adjust caps (p. 10)



FIG. 8.—Process for the time indicated in the table (p. 18). If not sealed before processing, seal spring caps before removal from the water bath by pushing down the lower wire as illustrated, and tighten screw-cap jars immediately on removal from the water bath

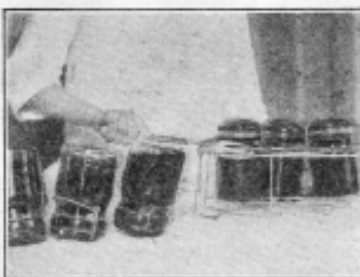


FIG. 9.—Invert the jars while cooling so as to test for leaks. Allow them to cool quickly to room temperature in a place protected from drafts, and keep them under observation for at least a week

This page about canning comes from the USDA Farmers' Bulletin No. 1471, "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home," 1926.



serves with a recipe that might have been passed down through her family or acquired from the extension agent. Canning vegetables required a similar commitment of time: one had to cut corn off the cob or cook the green beans to the right tenderness, not too hard but not too soft, before packing them in jars. Time that these teenage girls spent in preparing canned goods for contests and fairs was time *not* spent in leisure activities. While Mary and her friends could purchase canned goods in 1932, they chose to commit their time and energy to what is often an arduous work process, a reflection of the old-fashioned work ethic frequently associated with the farm families. Augusta County 4-H club goals echoed these values: “to encourage economy and thrift” and “to inculcate a dignity for labor.”¹⁰

At the same time that these canned goods reflected American values of industry and thrift, they also illustrated the maker’s embrace of modern, scientific standards and ideals and, in this case, up-to-date standards for food preparation and preservation. One must know the proper ingredients and recipe for preparing every kind of vegetable, fruit, pickle, meat, or other product in order to successfully *preserve* the food which is, ultimately, the goal of canning.. The brine for mustard pickles or the syrup for raspberries must be prepared according to a particular formula. Every can must be properly sealed, requiring the producer to become familiar with the correct procedures for sterilizing the jars and the causes of potential contamination that could ruin an entire batch of canned goods. The producer also must be knowledgeable about the equipment needed to suitably process each type of food, determining whether a hot water bath is sufficient, a pressure canner is needed, or another procedure is viable. There is no greater disappointment than tapping the lid of the freshly-canned jar to realize that it has not sealed and one’s effort and time has been wasted.

While the main objective in canning is food preservation, most people aspire to prepare and eat food that appears aesthetically pleasing. “People have an aesthetic impulse,” argues folklorist Michael Owen Jones, and farm women were no exception. They took great delight in building stores of attractive jars that would demonstrate their canning skills and their artistic talent. Augusta County assistant agent Catherine Peery remembered how farm women would proudly invite her into their cellars to show off their jars as one might



display a work of art. When Mary Cupp or other club members packed cans for a fair or contest, appearance became even more critical. All canning contests awarded points on appearance. The fruit or vegetables had to be arranged attractively in the jar. As 4-H club member Eleanor Glick recalled, “Beans were supposed to be one size, steamed a certain way, packed a certain way.” Preparing foods for display required more time than packing them for home use, but some girls and women enjoyed the challenge of using their artistic skills to create attention-grabbing canned goods. Local girls were “putting up quite nice looking jars,” agent Ruth Jamison proudly recalled. “If I sent their jars to Chicago, they got prizes.”¹¹

A collection of canned jars exhibited at a fair or submitted to a contest—bright, colorful arrangements of fruits, vegetables, and other goods—evokes the richness and abundance of fresh foods available on the farm and a nostalgia about old-fashioned country living. Usually, the canned foods are grown in vegetable gardens that the family cultivates, plants, tends, and harvests or in orchards the family established with apple, pear, peach, or cherry trees. Some fruits—blackberries, blueberries, or Mary Cupp’s raspberries—might be cultivated on the farm or found growing wild in the woods. Occasionally, the fruits or vegetables may come from generous family members, friends, or neighbors whose gardens or orchards are so plentiful that they can share their produce with others. In contrast with the canned vegetables available in the city, the farm family’s eye-catching canned goods suggest the healthy, fresh foods available to those who live in the country.

Last, a display of canned goods illustrates the farm woman’s planning and management skills: she knows the importance of preserving food for her family. The wide assortment of goods entered at the county fair or at a canning contest—jars of pickles, fruits, and vegetables, among other items—conjures up images of a fully-stocked pantry at home. An attractively arranged pantry illustrates that farm women and daughters have planned what foodstuffs they will need for the year and have preserved what they need sustain them through the winter months. They understand the importance of a balanced diet and are aware of modern standards for nutrition. They are, in essence, good providers for their families.

It comes as no surprise that the first U.S. Department of Agricul-



A farm woman canning raspberries, Rockbridge County, Va., June 1942. (NARA)

ture extension director Seaman Knapp and the earliest home demonstration agents, including Virginia's first female agent, Ella Agnew, pursued canning as the first activity for rural girls and women. Canning was practical, producing food for the family to eat, but it was also emblematic of the new role that they promoted for farm women and girls. Agents encouraged women to be committed to producing a nutritious and varied diet; expert in modern ideas about food preservation; and proficient in new management practices by producing and preserving food according to a "food budget."

The tomato clubs of the early 1910s laid the groundwork for extension food programs through the 1930s. Club programs taught girls how to cultivate vegetables and to maximize the yield through better gardening techniques. Agents offered demonstrations in "scientific" methods of canning tomatoes to reduce spoilage and to increase the amount of food preserved. Tomato projects culminated in thorough record-keeping, requiring each participant to keep detailed accounts about what they planted, how much they preserved, and how much money they



saved by canning their own vegetables rather than buying them. Agents argued that canning could save the household money by “developing household economy through saving by-products,” encouraging “thrift by turning fruits and vegetables into money,” and inspiring greater use of fruits and vegetables in family diets.¹²

Emergency programs during World War I further encouraged rural families to increase food production at home. A greatly-expanded army of female agents, funded through war-time programs, directed local conservation and thrift campaigns as part of a home-front food campaign. The home demonstration program urged farm women to cultivate larger wartime gardens and to preserve more of the produce through canning and drying. Agents helped to establish two hundred canning centers throughout Virginia in 1917 and an additional twenty-one the following year. According to extension reports, the number of canned goods white club women and girls produced increased from 154,455 to 2,457,741 containers between 1916 and 1918, raising the total value of canned, dried, and brined vegetables from \$49,029 to \$560,350. Ella Agnew noted in 1919 that “the necessity of saving certain homestuffs roused the women most effectively to the fact that while many of them had practical experience, more than this was needed if they were to keep up the health of the family and still save the food needed for war needs.”¹³

Overproduction of agricultural goods during the war, including the Valley’s cash crop of wheat, led to a significant decline in farm commodity prices when the war ended. Farm incomes plummeted and remained low throughout the 1920s and 1930s. During these years of agricultural depression, food programs again took center stage. Extension home economists intensified their efforts to promote home production and preservation of food by promoting a never-ending series of thrift and “live-at-home” campaigns. Augusta County women and girls followed suit, selectively adopting the advice that best fit their needs and interests.

One of the primary goals of the food program was to encourage better nutritional practices, mirroring developments occurring throughout the country. Modern transportation, changes in food production and distribution, and a growing cadre of experts on nutrition and health contributed to the transformation of the urban diet by the 1920s. City women took advantage of a larger assortment of



foods to purchase, from baker's bread to meat cuts "that are easily and quickly cooked" to commercially canned goods which eliminated fear of disease in home-prepared cans. Robert and Helen Lynd observed in their 1929 study *Middletown* that women's magazines and home economics courses in public schools were facilitating this change to a more healthy diet. They reported that "increased use of canned goods has meant ...a marked spread in the variety and healthfulness of the diet of medium- and low-income families throughout the year and when fresh garden products are expensive." No longer did city residents have a distinct "winter diet" and "summer diet;" now they could purchase fresh shipped vegetables and fruits even in the winter. Home economists introduced new methods of healthy cooking which, according to the Lynds, intruded on the "old rule-of-thumb, mother-to-daughter method of passing down the traditional domestic economy."¹⁴

Home demonstration agents sought to promote similar changes in rural diets. Beginning in World War I and continuing through the 1930s, nutrition education became a major initiative of the home demonstration program. Arguing that both women and men needed to understand how to select and prepare food for the "best development of the individual," home demonstration agents sought to teach rural people how to choose combinations "suited to the season, age, health, and occupation of the person for whom the food is intended." Agents taught rural women how to create more varied and nutritious diets using the foods that they could produce at home, to balance family meals, and to improve child-feeding practices. One of their primary goals was to incorporate more milk, whole grains, fruit, and vegetables into farm diets filled with starchy and fried foods. In 1924, for example, the Augusta County agent sponsored a menu contest involving green vegetables, fruits, and milk. Girls' projects encouraged them to eliminate candy, soda, and tea from their diets. Agents folded the food programs into the thrift campaigns by arguing that producing more food at home saved the family money.¹⁵

A "food and nutrition" project chosen by Augusta County 4-H club members in 1934 in association with the statewide "Thrift Campaign" further illustrates these extension goals. Printed recommendations for the "Food and Nutrition Program for 4-H Club Members" that agent Ruth Jamison distributed to county participants that



year state that “For happy, successful living, we need good health, and health demands correct food habits.” Through participation in this project, girls would learn “attractive ways to prepare and serve wholesome foods” and methods to “preserve goods grown at home in order to provide adequate meals throughout the year.” The first-year plan encouraged girls to “establish correct food habits” by selecting and preparing foods “attractively,” to can a variety of fruits and vegetables, to produce year-round gardens and preserve the home-grown products, and to practice good posture. The first month’s demonstration for the 1934 project outlined extension guidelines for a daily diet: “one quart milk; three servings of vegetables, such as carrots, potatoes, or kale; two servings of fruit, cooked or fresh; one serving of meat or eggs; and cottage cheese with jelly.”¹⁶

Jamison provided recipes incorporating these new ideas to club members. In her 4-H scrapbook, Edna Hulvey copied down the recipes Jamison presented that year: whole wheat cereal, health muffins, and whole wheat pudding for “Cereals and breads from home-grown grains;” cream of tomato soup, cheese soufflé, and cottage cheese loaf for “Soups and main dishes from milk;” and kale and vegetable loaf for “Tasty vegetables for winter.” To ensure that club girls tried these new recipes, the project requirements included “preparing at home at least one of the dishes demonstrated at each meeting.” Hulvey’s scrapbook also incorporated printed guidelines Jamison provided club members for a “low-fat, low-cholesterol” diet that excluded “fatty meats” such as pork, but included lean beef and chicken; recommended skim milk over whole milk and cream; and promoted vegetables served raw or cooked “without fat.” Many of these suggestions ran counter to regional cooking traditions. While Augusta County families ate chicken and some beef, for example, their primary meat remained pork, which they had traditionally preserved through salting, curing, or smoking. Few families preserved beef, because they did not yet have refrigerators or other means of preservation, recalled agent Blanche Lindamood.¹⁷

Club members responded to extension nutrition recommendations selectively, as the dairy program results reveal. Most families drank primarily whole milk, reserving some for the family to drink before they skimmed off the cream to make butter. They fed the skim milk that remained after butter-making to the hogs. Nor did they



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Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute
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Extension Division, Jno. R. Hutcheson, Director
Blacksburg, Virginia



FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR 4-H CLUB MEMBERS

PLAN

For happy, successful living we need good health, and health demands correct food habits. The food and nutrition program is planned to help the 4-H club girl establish these habits by learning attractive ways to prepare and serve wholesome foods, and by preserving foods grown at home in order to provide adequate meals throughout the year.

The work is divided into three projects, each covering a year's work. Special emphasis is placed on the Live-at-Home Project as it relates to feeding the family.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

To complete the project each member must have met these requirements:

1. Complete specific requirements for each project.
2. Make and use a 4-H club book.
3. Enter demonstration, judging, and growth work, and other contests for which she is eligible and has the time to do well.
4. Give at least one demonstration before her club.
5. Take part in club meetings and in all other club activities, such as rally and achievement days and exhibits.
6. Fill in report blank given her at the October meeting.
7. Work to attain standards set for the Health "H," as outlined in the growth work program.
8. In all matters follow instructions of home demonstration agent.

EVERY 4-H CLUB GIRL SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

1. Preside at any club meeting, serve as secretary, and be an efficient chairman of a committee.
2. Assist club leader when possible, share in planning and executing club program, keep 4-H club book up to date, give a well planned demonstration, make a talk and enter into discussions, exhibit her handwork at club meetings and fairs, take a fair share in community activities.
3. Assume definite responsibility in the home, dignify home work by practising the best methods, be a gracious hostess and welcome guest.
4. Live up to standards of growth work program, practice correct food and posture habits.
5. Dress appropriately at all times.
6. Appreciate the good things of life such as music, literature, and nature lore.
7. Cultivate a hobby that will help her to grow.
8. Help some other girl to attain her goal.
9. Work and play with others.

Food and Nutrition Program for 4-H Clubs, from Edna Hulvey's scrapbook.



eagerly adopt new suggestions for making cheese, promoted by Virginia's dairy specialist as early as 1918 as a substitute for meat and as a means for saving money. Augusta County families had customarily purchased hard cheddar cheese, often called "hoop cheese," at the country store, and the extension programs did not change this habit. One club member recalls how her aunt, Mattie Glick, tried to make cheese as part of a home demonstration project in the mid-



DEMONSTRATION TEAM

Edith Berry left; and Kathleen Hamrick right, of Spring Hill Club, with their canning equipment ready to give a demonstration at the State Short Course at Blacksburg. Edith was selected as the most outstanding club girl of Virginia and awarded the Montgomery-Ward Scholarship—a trip to Chicago to National Club Congress.

She won the trip on her splendid leadership and project record, having been a club member five years, taking five years clothing, four years canning, two years room improvement, two years poultry. During this time she has made many of her own clothes, done much of the family canning, and won prizes at the County, State, and International Fairs.

Edith has been president of her Club for four years, showing unusual leadership qualities, and is now the president of the County Council.

Edith Berry and Kathleen Hamrick, two of the prize-winning Spring Hill club girls, 1929, represented Augusta County as the "Demonstration Team" at the State Short Course at Blacksburg. From the Annual of Augusta County 4-H Clubs, 1929.



1920s, but Glick's frustration in the completing the project led her daughter to escape the house for some "peace and quiet." On the other hand, county women had traditionally produced what they called "smearcase," an old German version of cottage cheese. Perhaps because they knew how to prepare it, they selected few demonstrations on this topic. Blanche Lindamood taught the Centerville Club how to make cottage cheese croquettes in the mid-1920s, but member Edith Glick recalls that her mother never prepared the recipe again after the demonstration.¹⁸

While Augusta County women did not adopt many of the proposed dairy practices, they were already making most of their own bread, which was another extension goal. Virginia extension specialist Mary Settle urged farm women and girls to bake homemade bread because it was cheaper and more nutritious than commercial white bread, especially when made with home-grown whole grains. County women were baking yeast bread in the 1920s, sometimes several times a week. Bread-making was a prized skill in the community, and women, who treasured recipes passed down through their families and friends, saw little reason to adopt new practices or select programs on this topic. "I had a lot of my ribbons in bread," recalled Mt. Solon resident Mary Zimmerman Kiser, "And my mother was a real good bread maker." Because wheat was one of the leading cash crops produced in the county, women had ready access to the flour produced by local grist mills. "We just took our own wheat to the mill and they'd give you so much credit," said Kiser. "You could just go back and get the flour that you needed." This wheat was not the whole-grain variety recommended by agents; it was ground on rollers, not mill stones, which removed the more nutritious bran and germ found in whole-grain flours. Still, it was healthier than the bleached white flour sold at the grocery stores. Augusta County women supplemented the more labor- and time-intensive yeast bread with biscuits and cornbread, which required less time to prepare and bake. By the 1930s, they began to produce more of these "quick breads," and extension agents followed their lead by offering demonstrations on this topic. Edna Hulvey's 1934 4-H Yearbook includes extension recipes for soda biscuits and baking powder biscuits but no yeast bread.¹⁹

Extension recommendations to produce more fruits and vegetables met greater success locally, as evidenced in the county agent's annual reports. Many Augusta County women and girls were avid gar-



deners, and club members enthusiastically selected extension programs that encouraged them to showcase their gardening and food preservation skills. Still, agents set new goals for club women and girls: they wanted them to produce and eat a greater variety of vegetables throughout the year. Noting that the “average rural family does not save sufficient food for its need through the winter months,” Virginia agents encouraged women and girls to plan the amount that they needed each year—to create an annual food “budget”—and to produce and preserve to that budget.²⁰

To achieve this goal, agents promoted year-round gardens. In 1926, the Augusta County Advisory Council’s five-year plan established a year-round garden “on every farm” as one of its top priorities. The publication included a chart with thirty-eight vegetables that could be planted in the Shenandoah Valley between February and the fall months, from more traditional fare such as string beans, sweet corn, and tomatoes to less familiar ones including cauliflower and eggplant. By growing produce over an extended season, agents argued that farm families could enjoy fresh vegetables throughout most of the year, similar to their urban counterparts.²¹



In this photograph, the principal of a rural school in Rockbridge County and the farm woman, “who is the leading spirit in the school lunch project” review the “supplies that they have in hand.” (April 1942, NARA)



Augusta County women proved somewhat ambivalent about trying new vegetables. Perhaps in anticipation of these traditional attitudes, extension project guidelines required participants to grow and eat a few new foods each year. The 1934 thrift campaign required 4-H girls to plant “at least ten different vegetables in the spring garden” and five in a fall garden and then to incorporate them into their diet. In their project reports, club members had to demonstrate that they would “learn to eat at least two vegetables I have not cared for heretofore” and “try to like all vegetables served at home.” Extension recipes illustrated how women and girls could incorporate fresh vegetables into a healthy diet and cook them properly. Edna Hulvey’s scrapbook that year included suggestions for adding fresh greens or carrots to sandwiches prepared for school lunches and cooking kale until “just tender” and serving it with butter, rather than overcooking it and seasoning it with pork.²²

Augusta County agent Blanche Lindamood quickly recognized that she had to be flexible in implementing extension recommendations while accommodating local tradition. “They didn’t have too many new vegetables like spinach, carrots, they didn’t care for those,” she recalled. “But they had onions and lettuce and peas and snaps, green beans, and potatoes, and turnips and cabbage. But they didn’t have too many of the newer vegetables.” Some of her club members resisted them, as Beamer reported: “No, well my family won’t eat carrots, they don’t like carrots. And my family doesn’t want spinach.” And I said, “Well they like turnip greens and mustard greens, don’t they?” [Virginia food specialist] Janet Cameron was right: she said she thought that a food specialist should come from the section of the country in which they were working.

Lindamood believed that “if you worked that out, you’d find they had a much more balanced diet than some of the things that you are preaching.” By being creative and substituting familiar vegetables for the new ones, Lindamood could still follow the extension recommendation that families eat a yellow or green vegetable for dinner and supper.²³

Throughout all of the gardening and food programs, agents incorporated planning and management practices. “It is the up-to-date thrifty housekeeper who knows exactly how many quarts of each vegetable and fruit must be put up in order to have adequate food for her family,” according to a 1934 article in the 4-H club *Newsletter* describing the annual statewide thrift campaign. Gardening projects required that women calculate how much garden space the family needed to



meet its food budget, determine how it could be organized to rotate plantings, and then develop a schedule for spring, summer, and fall plantings and harvests. Augusta County's five-year work plan from 1926 provided the specific varieties of each vegetable that would be appropriate for the county and the preferred planting time, planting distance, inches between rows, and the amount of seed required for each. One agent enthusiastically boasted about how these new guidelines released rural women from depending on traditional folk practices passed down through families and communities: "Before, she had to run to her neighbors to know when to plant certain things in the garden; now she has a garden plan." To help farm families increase their yields, horticulture specialists offered instruction in soil improvement, similar to the new advice they provided to men for cultivating field crops. Agents presented new scientific recommendations for preparing the seed bed, cultivating the garden throughout the growing season, applying manure and "high grade fertilizer," and using sprays in a "proper and intelligent" method to keep loss at a minimum.²⁴

Organizing instruction around annual projects offered extension agents a mechanism to ensure that the women and girls at least



"Community kitchen" at the New Hope School, where home demonstration and 4-H club meetings were held. Photo taken in 1935. (NARA)



tried their recommendations. Club women completed a record book documenting their garden projects to submit to the agents at the end of the year. The book required each participant to include a plan of her garden and to keep a daily "Record of Planting, Harvesting, Amounts and Values," listing the vegetables, variety, amount planted, date planted, date first used, date last used, the value and amount of vegetables used in the home and those sold. Project guidelines specified that each participant plant a certain number of vegetables each year, including several new ones. The 1930 garden program, for example, offered two options. The first required that the garden contain a minimum of 1,000 square feet with at least ten of the "spring" and "fall" vegetables listed. The garden size doubled for the second option, which included planting seventeen spring vegetables, ten fall vegetables, and asparagus or rhubarb, which would produce a yield over many years. Program guidelines required participants to calculate the "labor income or profit" by adding the value of all the products and deducting the expenses. Participants added the total from prizes won to the labor income to generate the "grand total," or the total financial gain from their work.²⁵

This thorough record-keeping also served another important extension purpose: it demonstrated the economic value of women's gardening and food production work. Agents continually emphasized that producing a large amount of food in the garden would save the family money. The 1926 county work plan provides one of the most articulate arguments for this case. Noting that the "average man spends 40% of his income for food," the plan states that "the greatest single means by which the farmer can reduce this expense is through the home garden. No other one farm enterprise will yield as highly in value returned for money and labor spent as will a good home vegetable garden which provides an abundance of food throughout the year." The authors go on to observe that gardens "add to the farm income, but by inclusion of fresh vegetables in the diet, will add greatly to the health of the farm family." Written by the Augusta County Agricultural Advisory Board, not the Home Demonstration Council, the report is directed primarily at men. Perhaps the board was trying to garner more support for gardening work; men often helped cultivate the garden, plant the seeds, and sometimes plow between the rows during the season.²⁶

At a time when "people and activities were increasingly being judged by their market value or worth," home demonstration agents



utilized this same rationale to showcase the value of rural women's work. A 1940 Virginia study reinforced this concept by showing that a family which produced much of its own food could live on \$700 a year, while a family without home production would require \$1,100 to maintain the same standard. Thus, women "saved" the family \$400. Recalled Edna Hulvey Garber, "Mother, when she did her work at home, she was helping financially... That was the one way to make money that we just had to live on." To prove the value of women's work to the overall farm enterprise, extension home economists advocated that women keep complete records of the cash "savings" realized for every project in their record-books. Home demonstration agents then compiled county and state statistics to craft even more impressive statements about the quantity and cash value of women's work.²⁷ These lessons carried over into girls club work. To help remedy the "present farm situation," a 1933 article in the *Newsletter* encouraged farm girls to "make your family your market." Arguing that there was little use in selling goods on the market if prices remained low, the author encouraged girls to use the products of their labors at home and thus "turn time and labor into cash." By canning more vegetables for their families, "you will not have to buy any."²⁸

Extension agents intensified their efforts to increase home food production during the 1930s through "live-at-home" programs to help rural families survive the Depression. According to one participant, "The home garden, canning, and storage of foods took first place." Extension home economists stressed the need to "live from your own garden, fill pantry shelves, and save by baking at home." By 1932, 515 Augusta County women reported producing almost all of their food at home, and 625 were raising part of the vegetables "needed" by their families. Agents continued to stress the importance of planning the family's food needs: in 1933, 1,343 county women reported that they helped plan the family food supply.²⁹

The extension food programs experienced their greatest success during the early 1930s, offering families an opportunity to maintain their standards of living, at least in terms of food, in the midst of the economic crisis. By 1933, one of the worst years for many farm families, half of the 616 women participating in garden work raised a minimum of five vegetables in the fall garden and one-half raised at least two new vegetables, all for a value of \$46,200. Agent Ruth Jamison observed that the women "have learned that it pays to plant more often and to use



their vegetables while they are at the right stage." One thousand relief families received free garden seeds and county leaders conducted thirty meetings for these families on subsistence gardening, canning, and sanitary food drying techniques. Participating women reported canning 57,455 quarts in 1933. Food preparation programs emphasized better ways to use foods produced at home. "Using Virginia apples," "New ways of fixing eggs," "Meats and meat substitutes," "Milky way to health," "Making salads and their place in meals," and "Using home grown fruits all year" were among the demonstrations held in Augusta County.³⁰

While the annual reports show growth in almost all food programs, it was canning that became the ultimate symbol of farm women's achievements in the 1930s. Canned goods were the capital that women produced, a commodity which lent itself most easily to quantification and appraisal. During the 1934 thrift campaign, the one figure that that Augusta County Home Demonstration Council boasted about was not the amount of garden vegetables grown or loaves of bread baked but cans of food produced. That year, Augusta County's 457 participating club members generated the second largest number of canned goods in Virginia counties: 140,153 cans valued at \$31,383.70, an average of over 300 cans per participant. While preparing a nutritious diet and increasing home production garnered praise, a pantry full of canned goods became the most important symbol of women's economic value to the household.³¹

Canning illustrated how modern scientific methods transformed an old-fashioned and previously unreliable form of food preservation. Rural women could purchase self-sealing jars as early as the 1850s, but the poor seals often led acidic foods and brined vegetables to spoil. Tin cans were available by 1839 but they were also undependable; inventors experimented with improving canning technology throughout the century. Neither method of canning became very popular until after 1900, when new machinery could make glass jars cheaper than the earlier hand-blown ones. Government-sponsored campaigns to encourage canning during the first World War provided one of the strongest stimulants to encourage canning among women. By the late 1920s, Augusta County agent Ruth Jamison recalls that many women and girls were now canning with glass jars.³²

In spite of technological improvements in the canning process, many Americans remained ambivalent about purchasing canned products



in the 1920s and 1930s. The Lynds noted that a woman's club in Middletown debated the issue "Shall a Conscientious Housewife Use Canned Foods?"³³ While commercial practices continued to improve over these years, new canning methods came more slowly to farm families, a problem that home demonstration agents sought to correct. Agent Ruth Jamison recalled:

Now I went to one home... and we got ready and I gave a demonstration on canning and we put the jars in the tub, in the kettle, and I said, "Now these will cook three hours. Where's your clock? We'll set it." She said, "I don't have a clock." And I said, "How can you tell three hours is gone?" And she said, "When I can step on my head." She'd go outdoors and stand at the kettle and when she could step on her head, her shadow, it was time to take them off.³⁴

Jamison hoped to replace what she called "old-fashioned guess work," telling time by the sun, with new scientific management methods, using a clock.

Home demonstration agents taught club women and girls hygienic canning techniques that they hoped would eliminate the spoilage and disease sometimes associated with home-canned goods. Jamison emphasized the importance of sterilizing the jars properly before canning. "When I'd make home visits, I'd find that women had used glass jars and they had them out sunning on the picket fence. That's the way they were sterilized," she later lamented. Agents also taught new methods to pack and process the cans. According to club member Phyllis Zimmerman Wampler, rural women traditionally used a cold pack method—placing the tomatoes in a jar and then pressing down the lid and hoping it would seal—but this method proved unreliable. Extension home economists encouraged women to hot pack their tomatoes for greater success, a technique few county women were practicing at that time. The home demonstration program also taught women how to can vegetables, fruit, and meats that they would not have canned previously because traditional methods had not been dependable for these foods.³⁵

Augusta County women appreciated the new advice that allowed them to preserve well-liked vegetables, such as corn, but recommendations to can meat faced more resistance at first. In 1920, extension home economists promoted canning beef, pork, mutton, fish, and game in an effort to diversify the family diet and argued that canning was more nutritious than traditional preservation tech-



niques such as salting, curing, or smoking. Augusta County women were reluctant to abandon their customary use of pork or their preservation methods. That same year, when county agent Elsie Moffett presented demonstrations on meats, local women and girls produced 2,500 cans of pork compared to 575 cans of beef and only 150 cans of a “poultry/vegetable” mix which Moffett must have recommended. Most club members still chose to preserve meat the old-fashioned way that year, smoking 5,000 pounds of pork. Canning meat did not become a popular activity in the county until the 1930s thrift campaigns, and even then its popularity was short-lived. In 1931, Augusta County women canned only 201 quarts of meat; by 1933 the number had jumped to 9,682 quarts, only to decline in the following years.³⁶

Most Augusta County farm women did not acquire the new canning equipment proposed by the extension service, often because they could not afford it. As early as the 1910s, the USDA and Augusta County agents promoted pressure canners as the only safe way to process low-acid foods. They argued that this new technology saved time, by reducing canning requirements from three or six hours to only one hour or less, and improved working conditions, by allowing women to bring canning from an outside fire or outbuilding into the kitchen. Although Augusta County agents began conducting demonstrations about the importance of pressure canners as early as 1917, few county women purchased and used this new technology until after World War II, when farm incomes increased enough to purchase the equipment. Mary Cupp won her pressure canner through a canning contest, and she proudly kept that canner the rest of her life.³⁷

Although home demonstration agents put most of their food preservation efforts into canning programs, they did not ignore more traditional methods of food preservation, such as drying and root cellar storage.³⁸ Blanche Lindamood worried about the unsanitary drying methods that she saw in the county during the 1920s. While some women dried food such as apples at low temperatures in their ovens or in drying houses in their yards, others might hang beans on a string in the house, commonly known as “leather britches,” or spread corn or apples on the roof to dry. Besides being unhygienic, attracting flies and other insects, leaving fruit in the sun to dry required time, as women had to bring the food inside daily for up to ten days. Although Augusta County farm women could purchase home drying machines

PRESSURE CANNERS

A pressure cooker (fig. 2) is a vessel specially designed for obtaining temperatures higher than can be reached in a water bath. It is impossible to heat water alone to a temperature higher than the boiling point at the particular altitude at which the test is made unless the vessel in which the water is heated is closed and the cover clamped down so that the steam is held in under pressure. Such vessels are known as pressure canners, pressure cookers, and autoclaves.

A pressure canner should be strongly built, and the top should clamp on tightly so that there is no leakage of steam when closed. There must be an air outlet with a pet cock, and the top should also be equipped with a pressure gauge, a thermometer, and a safety valve. Since the temperature is a measure of the pressure, it is

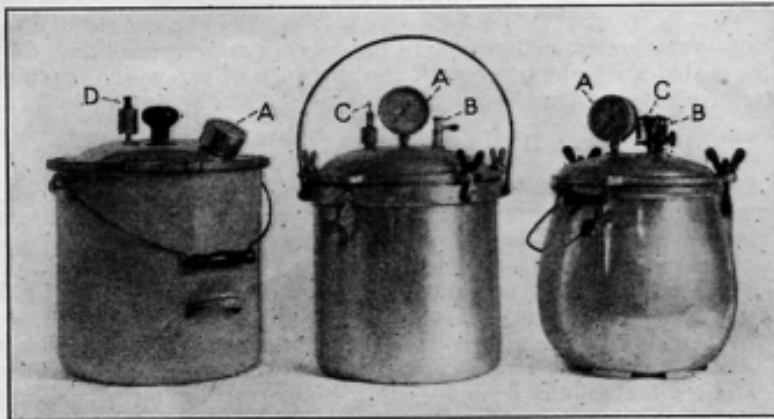


FIG. 2.—Three pressure cookers which may be used for canning small quantities: A, Pressure gauge; B, pet cock; C, safety valve; D, combined pet cock and safety valve. This should not be placed in position until air has been completely removed

ordinarily assumed that one can be interpreted in terms of the other. The pressure gauge, however, does not always indicate the actual temperature within the canner, and it is better to have both a gauge and a thermometer, for one then serves to check the accuracy of the other. The temperature reached in a pressure canner is in direct proportion to the steam pressure and is dependent upon the air having been completely removed. Ordinarily this is accomplished by allowing 3 minutes to elapse after steam issues from the pet cock before it is closed, or it may be assured by never completely closing the pet cock.

In selecting a pressure canner, the above requirements should all be carefully checked. Also in size it should be suited to the kind of containers and the probable number to be handled at one time. In case the canner must be lifted on and off the stove during the canning it is also important that it should not be too heavy. The relationship between steam pressure and temperature is shown in Table 2.

Mary Cupp received this pressure cooker/canner as a prize in one of her contests.



Canning in Your "Kook-Kwick" Pressure Cooker

CANNING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

The Kook-Kwick Pressure Cooker has proved very successful in canning fruits and vegetables and takes one-third the usual time required over the hot water method, thus saving time, fuel and unnecessary labor.

In canning fruits and vegetables they are prepared the same as for cold pack canning and then processed in the cooker the required time.

CANNING MEATS

Canned Meats are appetising and tasty when processed in the Kook-Kwick Pressure Cooker and will be found handy to have on hand for quickly prepared meals especially so for unexpected company.

Meats should be put in cans and covered with hot grease or fryings and processed the required time.

Sausage also can be kept in cans until midsummer. Make sausage into little cakes or patties and fry a light brown. Pack in cans, cover with hot grease or fryings, process the required time.

Best Sizes for Canning



22
Quart

16
Quart

11
Quart

7
Quart

Dimensions and Capacities

Liquid Capacity, Quarts	7	11	16	22
Interior Diameter, Inches	9	10	11½	12½
Interior Height, Inches	6½	8½	8½	10½
Net Weight, Lbs.	9¼	13½	18¼	22
Shipping Weight, Lbs.	12	16	21	27
Boxed for Export, Lbs.	30	60	70	95
Will hold—Pint Jars	4	6	8	18
Will hold—Quart Jars	3	4	5	7
Will hold—2-Quart Jars	0	1	3	4
Will hold—No. 1 Cans	6	10	22	35
Will hold—No. 2 Cans	4	6	14	16
Will hold—No. 3 Cans	2	2	6	10
Will hold—No. 10 Cans	0	1	1	2

The above capacities are based on standard jars.



by 1900, most could not afford them. Agents created a compromise between the traditional methods and the commercial product, teaching women how to produce their own “inexpensive but efficient” drying equipment. Annual reports reveal that only a few local women made these drying implements.³⁹

Extension home economists also offered recommendations on how to improve food storage methods. Augusta County families often built their homes into banks, which provided cellars to use for storage, but families without underground storage areas sometimes kept root vegetables outdoors by covering them with dirt. Agents offered advice on how to design and build an outdoor pit or banked cellar. Additionally, they developed recommendations for storing each kind of food. In some cases, the advice reinforced traditional ideas, such as hanging onions in a root cellar or attic; in other cases, agents recommended new methods, such as storing dried beans, peas, or seed crops in boxes or bins for more protection. Last, home economists added management skills to their program, suggesting that women develop a storage plan for cellars and pantries. In 1934, after studying this topic, four Augusta County clubs conducted tours to visit pantry demonstrators and study food storage. Ruth Jamison recalled that the demonstrators had “each shelf labeled and the number of cans to be found. Each type of food was cataloged in its own shelf so it could be found in the dark.”⁴⁰

Still, canning remained the centerpiece of the food program, according to Jamison. “They were getting away from drying a lot of things,” recalled Edna Hulvey. “[Canning] was better. They were better when you’d can, than to dry them. Better flavor.” Annual county Achievement Day programs often featured exhibits with “perfect examples of the canners’ art—colorful fruits, meats, and vegetables in glistening jars.” Cans were attractive, scientific yet nostalgic, and they could be counted, just like money in the bank. Agents and farm women alike tallied up their canned goods to impress others. Every county agent’s annual report provided a total of cans produced as if to testify to the labors of the women and girls. Even today, rural women still remember these numbers proudly as a badge of their work. Louie Ware described the year that she produced 450 cans of food for her family, while Carlyn Wise remembered the fall that she and her mother produced 200 half-gallon jars of peaches from their orchards.⁴¹

The canning contests in which Mary Cupp and her friends com-



peted, offered by community, county, and state fairs as well as national canning jar companies, provided women and girls a stage to exhibit their achievements to a broader world. They also exemplify the extension goals, blending nostalgia for the home-made foods from the farm with modern scientific methods and ideas. The three leading canning companies—Kerr, Ball, and Hazel Atlas—each sponsored an annual contest, and their requirements mirror the ideas presented through home demonstration work. For judging, each company awarded points for the “exhibit” or the “quality of canning,” evaluating whether the product demonstrated knowledge of proper canning techniques. This category also appraised appearance, a concept implied in the word “exhibit.” All of the contests specified that the competitor submit at least three different types of canned goods, while the Hazel contest required five, thus requiring competitors to demonstrate their knowledge of and skills in preparing more than one kind of food.⁴²

The second judging category emphasized planning and home management skills, a second major extension goal. All three contests judged the contestant’s record keeping and budgeting skills, awarding from twenty-five to seventy-five points of the total. Every entry required that the competitor prepare and submit the family’s annual canning budget or food budget. Some contests requested that each applicant reveal how she had planned her vegetable garden so that she would have ample produce to meet her budget. The Kerr contest additionally mandated the contestant prepare a “written record,” a narrative of her canning experience. The Hazel Atlas contest, in which Mary Cupp earned second place, required the competitor to develop an “emergency menu” that utilized the five cans she submitted, a menu that would emphasize a healthy family diet.⁴³

Augusta County women and girls participated actively in extension canning programs and contests and found satisfaction and pride in their products. Edna Hulvey, who won second place in the Ball Canning Jar Contest and third in the Kerr Contest in 1935, recalled how important home-produced and home-canned goods were to her family. Her grandmother “couldn’t can at all;” she did not have the knowledge nor technology to produce the variety of cans that Edna’s mother did, but she would dry or find some other way to preserve the foods that she could not can. But she did can her tomatoes. “My grandmother always said that she’d be ashamed to go to the store and buy a can of toma-



toes, when she had a garden and raised them.... She wouldn't want anyone to see her do a thing like that." Hulvey's mother Mary followed her mother's "conservative" outlook; she won fourth place in the 1935 Ball Canning Contest in which her daughter competed. These three generations—grandmother, mother, and daughter—reflected the principles of many farm women in Augusta County: they valued their productive role on the farm.⁴⁴

At a time when the country faced its worst economic times, during the depression years of the 1920s and 1930s, canning must have been comforting. Though it required an enormous amount of time and hard work, the process allowed women to find solace both in traditional roles that had served them well over the years and relief in the knowledge that, given all the other hardship in their lives, they could feed their families. Their attractive, well-organized, and colorful pantries and cellars stocked with carefully-prepared canned goods and other food supplies became symbols of their success as modern farm women. As Mary and Mary Hulvey, Mary Cupp, and other women and girls in Augusta County reveal, their fancy-packed canned goods—such as Cupp's prize-winning jar of raspberries—were great sources of pride. County women appreciated the opportunity to display their goods—essentially reflections of themselves—in contests and fairs and basked in the attention and awards they received. "I had a whole box of ribbons that I won at the Augusta fair, and the Richmond fair," remembered Mary Zimmerman Kiser. "I was really proud of them."⁴⁵

Endnotes

¹Virginia 4-H Club Letter 15 (April 1933) 12: 1.

²4-H Club Letter 15 (April 1933) 12:1; Virginia 4-H Club Letter 15 (February 1933) 10:2-3.

³ Maude Wilson, *Use of Time by Oregon Farm Homemakers* (Corvallis: Oregon State Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 256, November 1929), 12.

⁴Augusta County Agricultural Advisory Council, "Five-Year Plan for the Development of Agriculture of Augusta County" (Staunton, Virginia, 1926), 40.

⁵Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc, 1956), 156, 164-5; Waverly Root and Richard de Rochmont, *Eating in America*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 232-3.

⁶Lynds, *Middletown*, 153-6; Lucille Berry Masincupp, tape-recorded interview with author, Spring Hill Virginia, June 16, 1994; Carlyn Wise, tape-recorded interview with author, Centerville, Virginia, 31 July 1999; Bertha Driver Gassett, tape-recorded interview with author, Bridgewater, Virginia, 31 July 1999.

⁷Ruth Milkman, "Women's Work and Economic Crisis: Some Lessons of the Great Depression," *Review of Radical Political Economy* 8 (Spring 1976): 81-85; Robert and Helen Lynd, *Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Context* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1937), 178-9. See also Jeane Westin, *Making Do: How Women Survived the 30s* (Chicago: Follet, 1976).

⁸Mary Zimmerman Kiser, tape-recorded interview with author, Dayton, Virginia, 2 April 1993; Frieda Kiracofe Miller, tape-recorded interview with author, Mt. Solon, Virginia, 11



March 1993; Virginia Stickley Berry, tape-recorded interview with author, Spring Hill, Virginia, 13 July 1993; Regina Hutchens Kesterson, tape-recorded interview with author, Spottswood, Virginia, 10 March 1993; Bertha Driver Gassett and Carolyn Driver, tape-recorded interview with author, Bridgewater, Virginia, 31 July 1999.

⁹Nora Miller, *The Girl in the Rural South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1935), 93. One woman boasted that her children, who were all 4-H members, “learned to do the daily home duties in cooperation with older members of the family.” This “teaching cooperation in doing common tasks well” has been one of the most “outstanding” qualities of club work. *Extension Division News* 16 (September 1934) 10:4.

¹⁰*Virginia 4-H Club Letter* 15 (February 1933) 10:3; Warren I. Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 42; Augusta County Agricultural Advisory Board, “Five-Year Plan,” 38-9.

¹¹Beverly Gordon, *Bazaars and Fair Ladies: The History of the American Fundraising Fair* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998), xxv; Ruth Jamison, tape-recorded interview with author, Blacksburg, Virginia, 23 January 1981; Eleanor Glick, tape-recorded interview with author, Centerville, Virginia, 11 March 1993. The annual county reports are full of awards that the Augusta County girls won. In 1924, Augusta County girls won more premiums in canning at the state fair than any other county.

¹²Charles Burr, B. O. Bradshaw, and Hallie Hughes, “Handbook of Information on Boys and Girls Agricultural and Home Demonstration Work for County Agents and Club Leaders” (Blacksburg: VPI Agricultural Extension Bulletin No. 50, 1919), 50.

¹³Ella Agnew, “Home Demonstration Work,” in Jesse Jones, *Three Years of Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics in Virginia, July 1916-May 1919* (Blacksburg: VAMCPI, May 1919), 63-7; *EDN* 2 (May 1920) 6:2; *EDN* 2 (April 1920) 5:2.

¹⁴Lynds, *Middletown*, 153-158; Strasser, *Never Done: A History of American Housework*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 12.

¹⁵*EDN* 3 (June 1921) 8:2; Edna Hulvey, “1934 4-H Yearbook,” in Edna Hulvey Garber papers, Mt. Sidney, VA; Kathleen R. Babbitt, “Legitimizing Nutrition Education: The Impact of the Great Depression,” in Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 150; Alpha Gamma Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, *College of the Fields* (Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Publication 478-025, February 1987); *EDN* 6 (April 1924) 6:2.

¹⁶“Food and Nutrition Program for 4-H Club Members,” ca. 1934 (Blacksburg: Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute, Publication E-302, no date), found in Edna Hulvey, 4-H Yearbook.

¹⁷Edna Hulvey, 4-H Scrapbook, ca. 1933-5; “Foods Included and Excluded in Low Fat, Low Cholesterol Diet,” typescript, no date, in Hulvey Yearbook; “Dietary Patterns and Sample Menu for Low Fat, Low Cholesterol Diet,” typescript, no date, in Hulvey Yearbook; Blanche Lindamood Beamer, tape-recorded interview with author, Blacksburg, Virginia, 28 January 1991.

¹⁸Annual Report, Home Demonstration Work, Augusta County, Virginia, 1921, included in the USDA Extension Service Annual Reports, RG 33, Newman Library, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA; Agnew, “Home Demonstration,” 65; Grace Townley, “Plan for Home Demonstration Clubs Second Year” (Blacksburg: VPI Extension Bulletin 57, 1920), 12-3; Beamer, interview; Mary Kiser, interview; Kesterson, tape-recorded interview with author, Spottswood, Virginia, March 10, 1993; Edith and Eleanor Glick, tape-recorded interview with author, Centerville, Virginia, 11 March 1993.

¹⁹Augusta County Home Demonstration Council Minutes, September 26, 1993; Mary Settle, tape-recorded interview with author, Blacksburg, Virginia, 24 January 1981; Strasser, *Never Done*, 23; *Middletown*, 155; Root and de Rochemont, *Eating In*, 225, 231-2; Hulvey, Yearbook. Interviewees that talk about making yeast bread include Kiser; Driver and Gassett; Virginia Berry; Ora Thompson Lotts, 10 March 1993; and Van Lear, 13 July 1993.

²⁰Burr, et al, “Handbook,” 50-6.

²¹Augusta County, “Five-Year Plan,” 34-6.

²²“Food and Nutrition Program for 4-H Club Members;” “Augusta County 4-H Club Girls Thrift Campaign 1934,” (Blacksburg: Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, 1934), in Hulvey, Monthly Program Notes, 4-H Yearbook.

²³Beamer, interview; Frieda Kiracofe Miller, interview with author, Bridgewater, Virginia, 11 March 1993; “Dietary Pattern and Sample Menu for Low Fat, Low Cholesterol Diet.”



²⁴Augusta County, "Five-Year Plan;" *EDN* 13 (June 1931) 8:2; *4-H Club Newsletter* 17 (May 1934) 1:1.

²⁵*4-H Club Garden Record Book* (Blacksburg: VPI Extension Division, revised April 1930).

²⁶Augusta County, "Five-Year Plan," 34; Hiram Arey, tape-recorded interview with author, Waynesboro, Virginia, 29 July 1999; Bertha Driver Gassett and Carolyn Driver, tape-recorded interview with author, Bridgewater, Virginia, 31 July 1999.

²⁷Gordon, 8; *EDN* 22 (February 1940) 4:6.

²⁸*4-H Club Newsletter* 16 (May 1933) 1:4; Edna Hulvey Garber, tape-recorded interview with author, 15 July 1993.

²⁹Annual Reports, Augusta County, 1930-5, 1936-41.

³⁰Annual Reports, Augusta County, 1930-40.

³¹Minutes of the Advisory Board of the Augusta County Homemaker's Council, 1935.

³²Strasser, *Never Done*, 22-3; Jamison, interview, 23 January 1981.

³³Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 73; Burr et al, "Handbook," 50; Lynds, *Middletown*, 156.

³⁴Jamison, interview, 23 January 1981.

³⁵Jamison, interview, 23 January 1981; Mary Zimmerman Kiser and Phyllis Wampler, interview with author, Dayton, Virginia, 11 March 1993.

³⁶O. B. Martin and Ola Powell, "Home Demonstration Bears Fruit in the South," *USDA Yearbook* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 118; Amos Long, *The Pennsylvania German Family Farm* (Breinigsville, PA: Pennsylvania German Society, 1972), 179. Annual Reports, Augusta County, 1920-29; Beamer, interview.

³⁷Earl Lifshy, *The Housewares Story* (Chicago: National Housewares Manufacturers, 1973), 178; Martin and Powell, "Home Demonstration Bears Fruit," 117; Helen Alverson, tape-recorded interview with author, Blacksburg, Virginia, 25 January 1981; Beamer, interview; Mildred Payne, personal communication with author, Blacksburg, Virginia, 22 January 1981. Mary McCormick, whose mother was the first president of the Spottswood Club in 1929, recalled that her mother shared a pressure cooker with several other women in the community; McCormick, personal communication with author, 26 July 1993.

³⁸Several Augusta County interviewees recalled drying vegetables and fruits during these years, including Mary Zimmerman Kiser and Edna Hulvey Garber. Kiser's mother had an "evaporator" to help with the process.

³⁹Beamer, interview; Janet Cameron, "Can and Dry Your Garden Products" (Blacksburg: VPI Extension Division Circular 307, 1933); Agnew, "Home Demonstration Work," 62; Long, *Pennsylvania German Farm*, 197.

⁴⁰Roy Marshall, "Storing Fruits and Vegetables" (Blacksburg: VPI Agricultural Extension Bulletin 18, 1917); Mary McCormick, interview; Annual Reports, Augusta County, 1934; "How to Store Your Victory Garden Products" (Blacksburg: VPI Circular E-3631942).

⁴¹Jamison, interview, 23 January 1981; Garber, interview; Wise, interview; Louie Ware, tape-recorded interview with author, Spring Hill, Virginia, 13 July 1999; "Achievement Day Reveals Work's Scope," undated but probably 1937, in Minute Book of the Augusta County Home Demonstration Advisory Council Record Book.

⁴²"Ball Brothers 4-H Club Canning Contest for 1933," in *4-H Club Newsletter* 15 (February 1933) 10:3; "Kerr Canning Contest," in *4-H Club Newsletter* 15 (March 1933) 11:3; "Hazel Atlas Canning Contest," in *4-H Club Newsletter* 16 (May 1933) 1:3.

⁴³"Ball Brothers Contest;" "Kerr Canning Contest," "Hazel Atlas Canning Contest."

⁴⁴Garber, interview; "Awarding of Prizes a Feature," undated newspaper article in Augusta County Home Demonstration Advisory Council Record Book.

⁴⁵Garber, interview; Kiser, interview.



How certain residents of Staunton and Augusta County viewed the Confederate nation shortly after its foundation in April 1861

By Dr. Daniel A. Métraux

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Successful nations usually evolve very slowly and generally should have strong foundations both as nation-states and as cultural nations. The Confederate States of America survived for just four years fighting a bitter war for sheer survival having never fully controlled all of the territory that it claimed as its own. White southerners fought a tenacious and bitter battle to save their new nation, sustaining terrible losses of life and destruction of property for their cause. Why, I have often wondered, did they fight so hard and what exactly were they fighting for? What constituted this sense of Confederate nationalism? And finally, despite its brief history, is it correct to call the Confederacy both a successful nation-state and cultural nation?

Looking at the history of Staunton and Augusta County, I wondered why this area which I have called home for half my life could so resolutely vote for a Unionist candidate in the 1860 election and then five months later vote overwhelmingly for secession. When actual fighting broke out later that summer, local men fought in great numbers for the Confederacy and kept up their tenacious struggle to the bitter end four years later. What happened?

Aaron Sheehan-Dean, an associate professor of history at the University of North Florida, has written a provocative book, *Why Confederates Fought: Family & Nation in Civil War Virginia*¹ where he examines the letters, diaries and other documents by Virginia natives who fought for the Confederacy. Sheehan-Dean certainly demonstrates the deep



passion these soldiers had for their cause. Those areas of Virginia fully under Confederate rule saw military enrollments up to ninety percent among those men eligible for military service while such formerly die-hard unionist areas as Staunton city and Augusta and Rockingham counties had rates over 50 percent. Most of these soldiers fought hard and remained with their armies even as their situation grew increasingly dire in late 1864 and early 1865.

Sheehan-Dean introduces his study by noting that Virginia Confederates entered the war "with a host of overlapping motivations, including a defense of home, a belief in state rights, and a desire to protect slavery. An independent confederacy promised the perpetuation of all that white Virginians found rewarding about their antebellum world....

"Some people advocated a racial or ethnic identity for the nation, some pursued a new mode of political organization, some envisioned the chance to build a nation founded on God's will, while still others identified an opportunity to create a southern style of economic development unhindered by attachment to the North."²

Throughout the South there was the feeling that their new nation was a necessity because the federal government and, indeed the North, had betrayed the principles of the American Revolution. They argued that the whole point of 1776 was to establish freedom from tyranny, for each person and each state to achieve true freedom, liberty, and justice. The North, they charged, had abrogated these principles when it threatened to remove or at least abort the spread of slavery, the lynchpin of Southern prosperity. Even though Lincoln and the Republican Party did not call for the outright abolition of slavery, the new American government was resolutely opposed to its spread. Abolitionists were growing in power in the North and if they tipped the balance and gained control over the newly-founded Republican Party, the federal government might well remove the cherished liberties and traditions of the South.

Virginians were willing to remain in a Union where their state and their localities had both the freedom and power without too much interference from an overbearing federal government. One of the matters that could not be interfered with was personal property, and slaves were considered personal property. But it does not appear that slavery was the one and only burning issue that was on Virginians' minds at the time. The idea that the federal government would call up an army of 75,000 men to enforce its will on the South and would use fire power at



Fort Sumter in April convinced many Virginians that they should cast their lot with a Confederate government that would not interfere with their property or their collective rights.

There were two critical junctures, which persuaded Virginia, including the Staunton-Augusta area, to move from its pro-Union stance to side with the Confederacy. Lincoln was clearly a creature of the North — he had received all of his electoral votes and well over ninety-percent of his popular vote from northern states. Indeed, he was not even on the ballot in several southern states. Nevertheless, Virginia was still reluctant to leave the Union as long as there was the chance that Lincoln might negotiate a settlement with the South, but in April 1861 when Lincoln resolved to defend Fort Sumter and called for 75,000 volunteers to “suppress” the impending “insurrection” and to defend federal property in the South, even pro-Union Virginians saw this statement as a virtual declaration of war on their “nation.” It was at this point that Virginia quickly opted for secession.

Local Voices in Favor of the New Confederate Nation

Civil War scholar Edward L. Ayers and his team of researchers have constructed an incredible on-line archive, “The Valley of the Shadow,”³ that contains newspaper articles, letters, diaries, and other period documents. This website is an incredible research tool for those wishing to learn what people felt and did during the Civil War era through primary sources. I have mined much of the material from the Staunton-Augusta-Rockbridge area from the early stages of the Civil War to see how some people from the region viewed their new nation and why it was necessary to fight a vicious Civil War.

I have chosen four voices that seemed most representative of the feelings of the writers appearing in the Ayers archives.

William Frazier, a prominent resident of Rockbridge, wrote a letter⁴ to the Staunton *Spectator* in mid-October, 1861, where he very clearly states why it is necessary to support the Confederate nation even if it means war:

That, on our part, it is a war waged in defence of our liberties, our homes, our altars, our very existence as a people, all of us must admit and the impartial world will attest. That, on the part of our foes, so lately our fellow-citizens and brethren, it is now become a war of sujagation [sic], even to extermination, all their leading organs of opinion unblushingly avow and all their acts unmistakably show. That in seeking our overthrow and utter destruction they are animated by a spirit the most fiendish, and are daily committing within our borders crimes the most atrocious, impartial History, the



arbiter of nations, must forever record to their eternal infamy. This being "the situation," what is our duty to our selves and our children? What does common sense dictate? "If it takes every man and every dollar in the whole South to maintain our cause the sacrifice must be made.

Frazier goes on to urge the creation of a new form of government for the Confederacy that will honor the liberties and independence of each of its constituent states and will not develop a strong central government that could enforce its will on either the states or their citizenry: We must reduce and simplify its governmental machinery by reducing the scope and object of its jurisdiction—we must reserve to the States, severally, and to the people a far larger residuum of power, delegating to the Confederate agent a few important specific duties. In fine, we must not aim at a grand Union of States presently to be merged into one nationality, but strive for a simple league of independent, co-equal sovereignties, each jealous of its own rights and honor.

John B. Baldwin, a prominent Staunton lawyer and political leader, clearly states that his shift away from a pro-Union stance to one in favor of secession came when President Lincoln called for the 75,000 volunteers to put down the insurrection. The issue is once again one of personal liberties. He would stay with the Union if its government would stand true to what he considers to be the true spirit of the American Constitution. But if that government is willing to use military force, Baldwin argues, then it is time to leave that Union and form a new government which will stand up for the basic principles of 1776. Writing in a letter to G. B. Manley, Esq. of Richmond in early May, 1861, Baldwin states:

The moment it appeared beyond question that the people of the North, without distinction of party, were clamorous for a war of invasion and subjugation against us, our people accepted disunion as a fixed and irrevokable fact, and we stand this day a united people, ready with one mind and one voice, with one heart and one arm to make good the eternal separation which we have declared. The issue of peace or war is in the hands of the North. We only ask to be let alone, and to be allowed to consult our interest and our safety in peace. If this is denied to us, mark the prediction, we will give you a fight which will stand out upon the page of history an example for all time of the determination with which a people can make war when they are conscious of having exhausted all honorable means of pacification.

Nancy Emerson, a resident of Augusta County, kept a diary between 1862 and 1863 where she expressed strong sentiments in favor



of the Confederate nation. Her justification, like that of John Baldwin, is that the federal government has abrogated its right to rule because it has betrayed the fundamental principles of 1776 and is trampling on the rights of its citizens and states. It has become corrupt and has sent its army to the South to enforce its will by killing its people, burning its houses, and destroying its land. God Himself will not tolerate the murder and mayhem perpetrated by the North and will punish its leaders and their army for turning against the very principles that a Christian nation must be built on. God, Emerson believes, will stand by the new Confederate nation because unlike the North, it is built on strong Christian principles.

Emerson writes:

The government at W. seems to have become awfully corrupt, & will probably be removed in some way which time will reveal....How many churches have they polluted, how many graves desecrated. How have they soaked our soil with the blood of our noblest & best & then to cap the climax of injury & insult, talk of reconstructing the union. May the righteous Lord plead our cause against an ungodly nation, as he has done already, glory to his name. Render not to them their deserts O Lord. The Lord be gracious to all there as well as here who have shown me kindness or wished me well, & reward them a thousand fold, & if any of them are polluted with their guilt, cleanse them & deliver them from the doom that hangs over that land. A just God will visit sooner or later, & there will be no escape but by deep repentance. I cherish the cheering conviction however, that most if not all of *[deleted: them]* *[added: my friends]* are clear from this guilt.

Emerson goes on to state in early January, 1863 that she is convinced that her nation will be blessed by God because of its cause is just and because its leaders are devout Christians while the leaders of the North are not:

When has a year departed so crowded with events, & such events as the last? How many battles have we fought, & how has God blessed our armies with victory. Blessed be the Lord who has not given us as a prey to their teeth. As a nation, we have in a measure acknowledged God, & he has appeared for us most wonderfully, on one occasion giving us two great victories in one day; one at Richmond in Kentucky, & the other I think at Leesburg in Va. Our President, who is a plain, simple, consistent Christian, as appears, a member of the Episcopal church, has appointed days of special prayer on three occasions, when our cause seemed dark, our prospect rather, & in every case, the answer was manifest. After the two victories in one day, a day of thanksgiving was appointed & generally & joyfully observed. It was stated in the C. Presbyterian, that services were held in the churches, business generally suspended, & the city had the air of a quiet Sabbath. Three



out of four daily papers closed their offices. We have cause for gratitude more than we can express, that we have civil *[added: &]* military leaders who acknowledge God. The Pres. and vice Pres. Stephens, the commander in chief of our armies, Robert E. Lee. who is said to be a Christian of the same stamp as Davis, Stonewall Jackson, who is an elder in the Pres. ch in Lexington, his brother in law, Gen D. H. Hill, & others. Gen. Jackson sent a special request to the churches some time since for their prayers.

The key theme running through these documents, that a new nation must be created and keenly defended because the North has forgotten the principles of 1776 are clearly seen in this letter from James Schreckhise to Prof. G. T. Tifer. Written in mid-April, 1861, Schreckhise incorrectly links Lincoln to the abolitionist, perhaps not realizing that Lincoln did not campaign on a platform of abolition. He favors a new nation that will defend "Southern rights and principles:"

I hereby acknowledge the reception of your letter. I was glad to hear from you & to get the news from S. Carolina. There was great excitement here when it was known Fort Sumter was attacked. You say you have excitement in your town but I suppose it is not to be compared with what we have here. There never has been such a time in Virginia. I thought that whilst in Richmond I saw men excited but since then it has reached the acme. The committee sent by the Convention to find out the policy of old Lincoln received no satisfactory answer. Virginia has seceded & I understand it is not to go back to the people & I am glad of it. I do not believe one thousand votes could be obtained in this state to remain in the Union. The military have been called out. My brother left yesterday with his company for Harpers Ferry. For 10 volunteer companies have already left our county & a number are expecting to go in a day or two. The Old Dominion has at length arisen from her slumber to shake off the chains of the abominable abolition tyrant. Old father Abraham has learned that Southern blood dont course through cowards veins & I hope he that the day is not far distant when he will sensibly feel "that somebody is hurt." There seems to be but one determination here and that is to defend even unto death Southern rights & principles. I found my mother still alive but have been looking for her death almost every hour since. She cannot live long so far as we can judge. When I will get back to Newberry I know not. I thought of re-turning immediately but affairs here are in such a condition that I do not like to leave. My brother has gone to the seat of war & my brothers in law expect to leave in a day or two & my father desires me to remain a few days longer if possible.

Conclusion

These four writers cannot stand for the entire sentiment of the Staunton-Augusta or Shenandoah region. But their views are very strong



and very pronounced. They feel that the North has betrayed the principles of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” and that it is their right to leave this Union and form a nation that will uphold the fundamental principles of the American Revolution. They feel that their region, now their new nation, has a common culture and bond that honors these traditions and is different enough from the North to make a clear break.

Because Lincoln was elected President solely on the votes of the North without even a whimper of help from the South, the federal government which was supposed to represent the whole nation was now regarded as an instrument of the North and hostile to the interests and way of life of the South. With the whole force of the national government thrown against the individual states of the South, these states had no choice but to join together for self-defense. This new union of states would therefore inherit the mantle of 1776 against a federal government that had betrayed these principles.

Oddly, there is no mention of slavery in any of these documents, but slavery was an important institution in the Staunton-Augusta area. Ayers’ research indicates that there was a sizable slave population in and around the city of Staunton and Augusta County. Slaves were regarded as personal property and there was huge resentment against abolitionists in the North whom Virginians believed wanted to deprive them of their property. The right to personal property and anger at British threats against this right is clearly found in the Declaration of Independence. Abolitionist fervor in favor of emancipation is clearly a threat to the established idea of the indivisible right to one’s own property. It is this issue far more than of slavery that drove the thinking of this region in 1861.

Not long ago while driving to work, I encountered several bumper stickers denouncing the tyranny of the federal government – stating that Washington D.C. is suffocating hardworking citizens through increased taxes and laws and regulations that are stifling the rights and freedoms of the individual. It appears that the sentiments of 1861 are still on the minds of some residents of the Staunton-Augusta region.

Endnotes

¹Aaron Sheehan-Dean, *Why Confederates Fought: Family & Nation in Civil War Virginia*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

²*Ibid.*, 1-2, 9.

³<http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/VoS/choosepart.html>

⁴It had been suggested that Frazier run as a candidate for the newly formed Confederate Congress. He declines to run in this letter, but also supplies a clear rationale for fighting for the Confederacy.



The Shared History of Staunton, Augusta County, Ripley Ohio, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Bill Wellington

Musician and storyteller Bill Wellington presented a program on the history and music of Uncle Tom's Cabin as a special program for the historical society on November 4, 2010. In 2007 Wellington was asked by a University of Virginia professor to organize a group of singers and musicians to record nineteenth-century songs inspired by the book Uncle Tom's Cabin. Many of these songs had never been recorded and they became part of a website dedicated to Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous book and its influence on American history and culture.

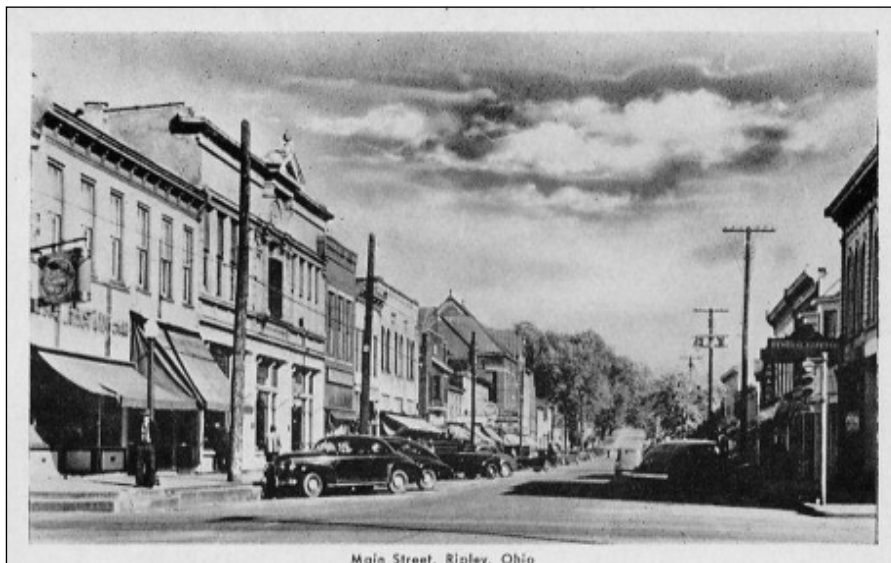
The little Ohio River town of Ripley (Pop. 1,745; 2000 Census) is famous for its history as a stop on the Underground Railroad where thousands of fugitive slaves successfully fled to freedom with the help of the town's citizens.¹ This town shares some history with Augusta County, Virginia, and its county seat of Staunton. As well as providing some curious coincidences, these connections demonstrate that the abolition movement was active in South as well as in the North in the years leading up to the Civil War, and that it was fueled by a wave of Presbyterian missionary spirit that flowed from Augusta County to the south and west in the early years of American history.

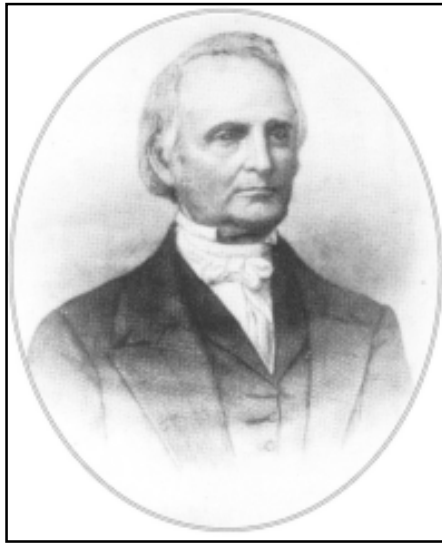
Both the founder of Ripley, Colonel James Poage, and its most famous citizen, Reverend John Rankin, were born in the South. They were drawn to Ripley because of their anti-slavery views: Colonel James Poage came from Virginia, via Kentucky, for the purpose of manumitting his slaves in a free state.² John Rankin came from Tennessee, via Kentucky, because his sermons against slavery and his attempts to educate slaves in those places proved to be unpopular.³ Both men and their families took advantage of the town's strategic



location to create a haven for fugitives along the border between oppression and freedom.

The first connection between Staunton and Ripley lies in the fact that Ripley founder Colonel James Poage and his family were from Staunton, and in 1812, when they first established the village that would become Ripley, they named it "Staunton." in honor of their native place.⁴ Colonel Poage's grandfather Richard was born in Ireland and was one of the earliest settlers in the Staunton area of Augusta County. His son John had accompanied George Washington in 1755 on the ill-fated Braddock expedition, and it was Washington who urged the Poage family personally to help settle the Ohio River Valley after the Revolutionary War.⁵ Colonel James Poage responded by moving in the 1790s first to Ashland, Kentucky, and then to Maysville, Kentucky, before finally settling on a 1,000-acre tract of land on the Ohio side of the river, not far from Maysville in 1804. Colonel Poage had received the tract of land for surveying work he had conducted following the Revolutionary War.⁶ Upon settling in Ohio Colonel Poage freed his family's twenty slaves. He laid out the streets of the town and built three brick houses on Front Street for his family. In 1816 the town's name was changed to "Ripley" in honor of a War of 1812 patriot. In that same year Colonel Poage donated land to help found the First Presbyterian Church of Ripley.⁷ James Poage died in 1820.





John Rankin

In 1822 the church that Colonel Poage helped found hired John Rankin as its minister, bringing to Ripley another connection to Augusta County, Virginia. Rev. Rankin's mother was Jane (also called Jannett) Steele, daughter of Samuel Steele. She was born in Steeles Tavern, a stagecoach stop on the Valley Pike right on the Augusta-Rockbridge line. His father was Richard Rankin from Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. In the 1790s Richard Rankin and his wife Jane moved to Jefferson

County, Tennessee, to take part in missionary service for the Cherokee Indians organized by Gideon Blackburn, who was also from Steeles Tavern.⁸ John Rankin was born in Dandridge, Tennessee, in 1793.

There were two events in the year 1800 that dramatically changed young John Rankin and kindled in him a passion to emancipate slaves in America. The first event was that John attended a camp meeting fueled by the spirit of the "Second Great Awakening" sweeping the country, where he was infused with religious spirit. The second 1800 event that had a great impact on John was the slave rebellion of Gabriel Prosser in Richmond, Virginia. News of this uprising awakened in the boy an awareness of the plight of people in bondage.⁹ Together, the impact of these two events somehow created a fire in John Rankin that caused him to become a zealous and single-minded champion of the cause of emancipation in sermons, speeches, letters, books, and actions. His six sons all served in the Civil War, and his contributions were so great that when someone once asked the famous abolitionist Henry Ward Beecher "Who abolished slavery?" he replied: "John Rankin and his sons did."¹⁰

When John Rankin learned that his brother Thomas, then living in Middlebrook, in Augusta County, had bought slaves, he began writing a series of letters to his brother condemning slavery. This connection to Augusta County yielded a remarkable document that aided the cause



of freedom for the slaves. In 1826 the letters John Rankin wrote to his brother were published as a book that became very valuable to the abolitionist cause. In the book, *Letters on Slavery Addressed to Thomas Rankin, Merchant at Middlebrook, Augusta County, Virginia*, Rev. Rankin gives an unflinching assessment of the evils of slavery:

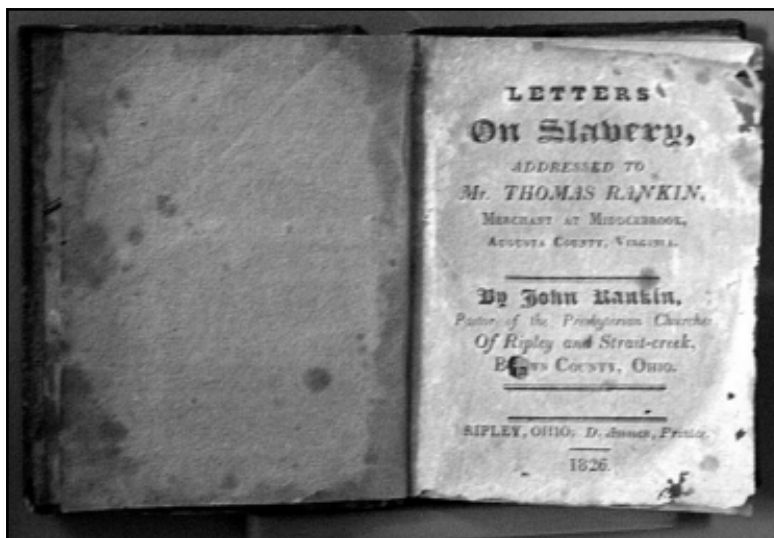
I consider involuntary slavery, a never failing fountain of the grossest immorality, and one of the deepest sources of human misery; it hangs like the mantle of night over our republic, and shrouds its rising glories. I sincerely pity the man who tinges his hand in the unhallowed thing that is fraught with the tears, and sweat, and groans, and blood of hapless millions of innocent, unoffending people.¹¹

Apparently Thomas Rankin's wife had died, because in appealing to his brother, John Rankin reminds his brother of his love and affection for his wife, and then asks him to remember these emotions when contemplating the life of a slave:

You, brother, once sustained the relation of husband, and doubtless possessed all the tenderness of that endearing relation, and though the object of your warmest embraces now lies cold and



Middlebrook, Virginia



Title page from John Rankin's book

silent in the grave, yet her very dust is dear to you, and her memory awakes the liveliest emotions in your heart;Tell me, dear brother, how could you have endured to see her tender frame bleed beneath the lacerating whip? Could you have witnessed her innocent tears and cries...?¹²

In closing, John Rankin reminds his brother, not too subtly, that the future of his mortal soul depends upon whether or not he keeps his slaves:

I must now close my series of letters—I hope you will receive them as so many tokens of sincere affection for you. My heart fills as I approach the closing moment. It seems as if I am about to bid you a long and uncertain farewell! All the tender scenes of our youthful days seem at once to rise to view, ... while the appalling thought presses upon me that you will refuse to hear a brother's voice, the voice of reason, and what is infinitely more, the voice of God. A brother pleads with you; nature by all her tenderest sensibilities, and the God of nature, by all those heavenly sympathies that issued from a Savior's bleeding heart, plead with you, to 'do justly, to love mercy,' and to let the oppressed go free!' And can you refuse? And if you do, I am your brother—I will not speak your doom!!!
FAREWELL!!! THE END.¹³

Evidently, Thomas did get the message and moved to Ohio, where he freed his slaves. In 1828 John Rankin built a house on top of a hill above the town of Ripley overlooking the river and Kentucky. From a



John Rankin's house in Ripley, Ohio



Cellar at Rankin house where slaves were hidden.

post outside the house he would hang a lantern when it was safe for fugitives to cross the river. John built a stairway of hundreds of steps up the steep hill from the river to his house. More than 2,000 fugitive slaves¹⁴ made their way to this first stop in the land of freedom, and the Rankins, the Poages, and other families assisted in sending these people further north. The ultimate goal for the fugitives was Canada, especially after 1850 when the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law made it unsafe to be African American, free or fugitive, anywhere in the North or South.



Illustration of Eliza's flight from Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Ironically, in spite of the impact his words and actions may have had, John Rankin's greatest contribution to the cause of emancipation was, no doubt, an anecdote he shared with a young woman named Harriet Beecher Stowe, a fellow abolitionist who was living in nearby Cincinnati. The story he told Mrs. Stowe was about a young fugitive slave mother who, in desperation to get away from bounty hunters, crossed the river jumping from ice floe to ice floe while clutching her young son to her breast. Years later, in response to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 this young woman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrote a book that included a story about a young fugitive mother named Eliza who crossed the river in this way. This scene became the most famous scene from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Mrs. Stowe's earthshaking novel about slavery. The story of Eliza moved millions of hearts and helped to change many minds:

A thousand lives seemed to be concentrated in that one moment to Eliza. Her room opened by a side door to the river. She caught her child, and sprang down the steps towards it. The trader caught a full glimpse of her, just as she was disappearing down the bank; and throwing himself from his horse, and calling loudly on Sam and Andy, he was after her like a hound after a deer. In that dizzy moment her feet to her scarce seemed to touch the ground, and a moment brought her to the water's edge. Right on behind they came; and, nerved with strength such as God gives only to the desperate, with one wild cry and flying leap, she vaulted sheer over the turbid current by the shore, on to the raft of ice beyond. It was a desperate leap—impossible to anything but madness and despair; and Haley, Sam, and Andy, instinctively cried out, and lifted up their hands, as she did it.



The huge green fragment of ice on which she alighted pitched and creaked as her weight came on it, but she staid there not a moment. With wild cries and desperate energy she leaped to another and still another cake;—stumbling—leaping—slipping—springing upwards again! Her shoes are gone—her stockings cut from her feet—while blood marked every step; but she saw nothing, felt nothing, till dimly, as in a dream, she saw the Ohio side, and a man helping her up the bank.

“Yer a brave gal, now, whoever ye ar!” said the man, with an oath.¹⁵

Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose father was Lyman Beecher, president of Lane Theological Seminary, came to Ohio in 1832. Like the Poages and the Rankins, the Beechers were staunch Presbyterians in the emerging West. Much of this spirit was channeled from Augusta County, Virginia, to the town of Ripley, where it became a blast furnace in the form of John Rankin, whose defiant pursuit of the immediate emancipation of all slaves rivals the commitment of many more famous abolitionists. While his father was a pious man, it was especially John’s mother, Jane Steele, who was born in Au-



Harriet Beecher Stowe

gusta County, who guided the young John Rankin’s intellectual development. Upon her death he said of her: “My mother was a woman of strong mental capacity, well able to give reason to the hope that was within her, a woman of remarkable intellectual culture for one brought up on the frontier [and whose] whole life was that of a pioneer.”¹⁶

John Rankin continued to defy the slave laws and continued to speak out against slavery up until the Civil War. He died in 1886 at the age of ninety-three.



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1. Hagedorn, Ann: *Beyond the River: The Untold Story of the Heroes of the Underground Railroad*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 2002
2. Evans, Nelson W., and Stivers, Emmons B. *A History of Adams County Ohio*, West Union, Ohio, E. B. Stivers, 1900
3. Rankin, John: *Letters on Slavery Addressed to Thomas Rankin, Merchant at Middlebrook, Augusta County, Va.* Boston, Garrison & Knapp 1833
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Endnotes

¹<http://www.ripleyohio.net/htm/rh.htm>

²http://www.cliftonupc.org/index.php?p=1_14_Bicentennial-History-Blog

³Anne Hagedorn, *Beyond the River: The Untold Story of the Heroes of the Underground Railroad* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 30-31.

⁴<http://www.ripleyohio.net/htm/rh.htm>

⁵Nelson W. Evans and Emmons B. Stivers, *A History of Adams County Ohio* (West Union OH: E. B. Stivers, 1900), 612.

⁶Hagedorn, 9-10.

⁷http://www.cliftonupc.org/index.php?p=1_14_Bicentennial-History-Blog

⁸<http://www.saponitown.com/forum/showthread.php?3740-Steele-Rankin&p=31600>

⁹Hagedorn, 21-22.

¹⁰Hagedorn, 274.

¹¹John Rankin, *Letters on Slavery Addressed to Thomas Rankin at Middlebrook, Augusta County, Va.* (Boston: Garrison & Knapp, 1833), 7.

¹²Rankin, 19.

¹³Rankin, 121.

¹⁴http://www.cliftonupc.org/index.php?p=1_14_Bicentennial-History-Blog

¹⁵Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Boston: John B. Jewett, 1852), 93-94.

¹⁶Hagedorn, 21.



The Trial of Hemphill Trayer

By David McGuire Trayer

Editor's Note: The author was inspired to write of his ancestor's trial after visiting the historical society's "Curious Crimes of Augusta County, Staunton, and Waynesboro," exhibit that was mounted in 2009 in the History Gallery of the Smith Center as part of the community's BIG READ celebration and the reading of The Maltese Falcon.

A recent exhibit, "Curious Crime Artifacts from the Valley's Past," in the Smith Center for History and Art in Staunton, featured some of the capital crimes that have occurred in the long history of the county. It brought to my mind a "forgotten" case in which a harmless old Irish cabinet-maker was murdered in Staunton in 1853. The case is interesting because it is perhaps an instance of a wrongful conviction that ended in execution. It also happened to be profoundly significant to the heritage of my own family. My paternal great grandfather, Andrew Hemphill Trayer, was convicted and hanged for the crime.

I first learned of the incident years ago when I was shocked to read in Peyton's *History* a mention that in 1854 Hemphill Trayer had been hanged for the murder of an old man named William Coleman, but no further detail was offered.¹ A bit more information was given in Waddell's *Annals*, although the only person named was that of the victim.²

William Coleman was murdered in Staunton during the night of August 11, 1853. He was a small old man, a cabinet-maker by trade, and one of the meekest and most inoffensive persons in the town. His residence and shop were on, or near, the site of the Staunton Gas Works, and being a bachelor, he lived entirely alone. He was last seen alive on Thursday, August 11th. On Friday and Saturday his doors were closed, and as he did not appear about his premises as usual, fears in regard to him began to be entertained. On Sunday morning, the 14th, the house was entered, and there lay the body of the old man, his skull crushed by a hammer which was found near by, covered with gore. The house had apparently been searched for money, which, from Coleman's industrious and frugal habits, it was supposed he possessed.



Suspicion fell upon three men, and they were arrested, one of whom turned State's evidence. The other two were convicted and sentenced to be hung; but one only was executed, the punishment of the other being commuted by the Governor to confinement in the penitentiary.

As the case developed it was closely followed by the Staunton newspapers and was picked up by other newspapers in Virginia and as far away as New York.³

Following the discovery of the murder, a jury of inquest was appointed and a prompt investigation conducted at the crime scene. Their finding was reported in the local newspaper.⁴

The deceased occupied a house, as his dwelling and Cabinet-making shop, near the divergence of the two streets leading into town from the junction of the Plank road and the Waynesboro Turnpike, and near the residence of Mr. W. Craig; a spot in close view of which people were constantly at work or passing and repassing. On Thursday afternoon, he was last observed about his house. On Friday morning, one or two persons called, on business, and knocked but did not see or hear him: nothing unusual, however, was surmised, as he lived a secluded life frequently refusing for days to see any one. But on the Sunday morning succeeding, some of his neighbors, observing his door had been so long closed, entered the house and found him lying in his blood on the floor, dead. His body was rapidly undergoing decay, and it was evident he had been dead for several days. Some four or five wounds were visible on his head, inflicted with a common "claw-hammer," which was still in the room clotted with blood and the gray hairs of the old man.

He was in his usual dress, and when the murderer approached was probably reading or sewing; a paper and his spectacles were on the table, and some thread and buttons scattered over the floor. On his fire was a pot containing a chicken, which he was evidently cooking for his supper. His chests and drawers were open or unlocked, as if a robbery had been accomplished by the murderer, some loose coins amounting to near five dollars were found by the jurors in searching the house. At a subsequent search \$35 were found buried under his work bench.

The murder was committed doubtless on Thursday evening. About sunset of that day, some females living near heard a noise as of a scuffle in his house, and both arose to see what was the matter. One went outside where she saw nothing; the other ran up stairs to a window where although the noise had ceased, she saw a man approach the open door in Coleman's house, and after looking her boldly in the face for a moment, closed the door again from the inside. Nothing was thought or said of this circumstance, until the horrid deed was afterwards disclosed. The man, no doubt the very murderer, was not recognised as an acquaintance by the person



who saw him, although her recollection of his appearance may lead to his identification hereafter. A reward for his detection has been offered by the Common Council. It is all important that the perpetrator of such an inhuman and defiant outrage upon society and law should be punished surely and promptly.

Money was doubtless the only object of the murder. It was generally understood that by his industry at his trade, the deceased was accumulating money which he kept about his person or his house; but little of which could be found by the jury of inquest. He probably had no enemies in the world; living, as an eccentric old bachelor, entirely to himself, honestly laboring at this trade, he could offend no one. He left a curious assortment of books and papers. Of newspapers he was probably fond, as many were carefully stowed away, and scraps cut from others, of a moral and didactic character, were strewn about his house. The Spectator of last week was lying open on his table, as if he had just been reading it – little did he suppose that the next number would announce his own cruel murder.

On August 15 the Staunton Town Council voted to offer a five hundred dollar reward for information leading to the apprehension of the murderer.⁵

After less than a month of investigation, three suspects were arrested: Andrew Hemphill Trayer, Henry T. Wilson, and Edmund Perkins. Trayer and Wilson were arrested in Staunton. Perkins had left town, but was picked up in Greenville.⁶ The Commonwealth charged them with Coleman's murder. When arraigned, Perkins denied any participation in the crime and agreed to appear as a trial witness against Trayer and Wilson. This led to his acquittal, but he was bound over for testimony on behalf of the Commonwealth at the time of the trial.⁷

Hemphill Trayer was a resident of Staunton, about forty-eight years old, and a butcher by trade.⁸ He was one of seven children born to Daniel Trayer and Jane Knowles. (Daniel, a respected Staunton brick mason, had emigrated from his birthplace in Maryland around the turn of the century.) Hemphill had been married to Jane Davis of Staunton for twenty years,⁹ and they were parents of six children, ages 3 to 16. At the time of Hemphill's arrest, Jane was pregnant with their seventh child. Her child, a boy, was born after his father was executed. He would become my grandfather.

Henry Wilson was a native of Albemarle County, Virginia. In some accounts his name was spelled Willson. Edmund Perkins (who



was sometimes referred to as John) was from Petersburg, Virginia, and was a baker. Both Wilson and Perkins boarded with Trayer in Staunton and had recently assisted Trayer “in his work.”¹⁰

The trial was scheduled for the November session, with Circuit Judge Lucas P. Thompson presiding. A Grand Jury was sworn in and considered the evidence on November 1. That afternoon they returned a “true bill” of presentment for murder against Trayer and Wilson.¹¹ The prisoners elected to be tried separately, and the record indicates that this happened, but the same trial jury heard both cases. The trial started promptly the next afternoon, and evidence and arguments were presented through November 17. Counsels for the Commonwealth were Harman, Imboden, McCue, and Kinney and for the defense Stuart, Baldwin, Michie, Robertson, and Kayser.¹² The jury returned their verdicts of “guilty of murder in the first degree” on November 18. Curiously, identical verdicts were returned against both prisoners, that is, both were found to be the murderer and both were found to be an accomplice to the murderer.¹³

Pivotal to the outcome of the trial was the testimony of state’s evidence witness Edmund Perkins. His testimony, and that of several of the other witnesses, was published as part of a synopsis of the trial in the *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*.¹⁴ In part he testified that on the night of the murder he had been at Trayer’s home and had gone to sleep on the floor, after which:

...he was awakened by Trayer and Wilson shaking him, and calling him John, as usual. They said to him “Come and go with us and steal some roasting ears and kill a man.” Their faces were close to him, and they spoke in a low tone or whisper. Both spoke the same words – didn’t know which spoke first. He said to them, “Let me sleep, I don’t want to go.” They then left him and went out of the gate. After they got a short distance from the house – 40 or 50 yards – he got up and went out of the gate. He looked up and down and saw them going towards town. He didn’t know what they were going after, but followed them to see. They turned to the left towards the bridge, and he lost sight of them for a few minutes. When he reached the corner, he got sight of them again. He followed on and saw them go to the place where the murder was committed. He didn’t know anything about the place at that time. He saw them enter the lot and the door of the house. The door was pulled to after them, but an opening was left. He then saw a man’s arm raised as if he was going to make a blow – immediately the light “was banished,” whether intentionally or not, he didn’t know. He heard and saw no more, but went back to Trayer’s as quick as he could walk. He lay



down on the floor as usual, and commenced thinking to himself, "supposing they had killed a man and I being living in the family there, and if this murder was found out on these men that people might suspect me with them and think I was in with them, and what a horrible condition I would be in, my not having no friends in this place." He lay thinking thus for some time and then fell asleep. He was again wakened sometime in the night or morning by Wilson and Trayer. They said (in the same tone of voice as before) they had killed a man and if ever he "divulged" it, they would kill him, but if he said nothing about it they would divide the money with him after it all died away. He didn't know which spoke first but both "confirmed the same words."

Another eyewitness who testified at the trial was a Mrs. Peer. According to the newspaper synopsis, she lived near Coleman's house and testified that "On the evening of the murder, between sundown and dark, heard a noise in Coleman's house and went upstairs to look. Saw a man in the house come to the door and shut it." She could not identify the man.¹⁵

After a guilty verdict was returned by the trial jury, an appeal for a new trial was made by the defense counsel on the ground that "the verdict was contrary to evidence" and that "the testimony of Perkins was not entitled to full credit, and should not have been received by the jury, and that the remainder of the evidence was only sufficient of itself, to raise suspicion of guilt against the prisoners." The motion was promptly overruled.¹⁶

Trayer's sentence was returned on November 28.¹⁷

Andrew H. Trayer late of the Parrish of ____ and County of Augusta, who stands convicted of murder in the first degree, was again led to the bar in custody of the keeper of the Jail of this Court, and thereafter it being demanded of him, if any thing for himself he had or knew to say, why the Court here to Judgment and execution against him of and upon the premises should not proceed and nothing being offered or alleged in delay of Judgment. Therefore it is considered by the Court, that he be hanged by the neck until he be dead and that Execution of this Judgment be made and done upon him the said Andrew H. Trayer by the Sheriff of Augusta County on Tuesday the 6th day of January next between the hours of 11 o'clock in the forenoon and two in the afternoon of the same day at the usual place of execution, and whereupon he was remanded to Jail.



An almost verbatim sentence was pronounced against Wilson. In addition to the minutes of the trial as recorded in Common Law Order Book 5, other details of the case may be found in a bundle of records of the trial in the Augusta County Courthouse.¹⁸

Judge Thompson, at the request of several citizens, published his remarks made at sentencing in the newspaper.¹⁹ His words are firm in support of the verdicts, but he repeatedly refers to the evidence as circumstantial and suggests some personal doubt concerning the verdicts. Specifically, concerning the verdicts, he says (*italics added*):

Nay more, it is not only an honest but a legal verdict, with which I have no legal right to interfere, to set aside, or annul; and which as a Judge I am bound to acquiesce in, to sanction and approve, *whatever might have been my individual opinion had I been sitting on your jury as to the credibility of Perkins, or the sufficiency of the independent circumstantial evidence, or the combined effect of both taken in connection and in aid and corroboration of each other.*

A petition to Virginia Governor Joseph Johnson on behalf of Henry T. Wilson was circulated in the community by friends of Wilson. The official appeal to the governor seems to have been launched by defense counsel Thomas J. Michie who wrote to the governor on January 2, 1854 (only four days before the scheduled executions) asking for executive clemency for both Trayer and Wilson.²⁰ He added this opinion (*italics added*):

I never was [further?] satisfied that the evidence ought not to have removed reasonable doubt of guilt, and am gratified to find the Judge of the same opinion. Do try to deliver both from death. A confinement for life will satisfy the ends of justice & then if their innocence should hereafter appear we should all be relieved of awful responsibility.

A local newspaper reported that documents containing the trial evidence was actually carried to the governor the next day, January 3, by one of Wilson's cousins.²¹ Apparently the courier, unnamed in the newspaper article, actually met with the governor but failed to inform him of the fact that the appeal applied to both prisoners, not just his uncle. To allow him time to consider the evidence, the governor immediately granted a respite of thirty days to Wilson, but not



to Trayer. This obvious inequality is not explained in extant records of the case.

Eleven days after Trayer was executed, defense counsel Michie wrote to the governor again requesting clemency for Wilson, whose execution had been rescheduled to February 3. Although Trayer was already dead, Michie's letter is significant to both prisoners.²² He notes particularly Judge Thompson's personal sentiments (*italics added*):

Permit me dear sir, to call your attention, especially to the paper transmitted to you along with notes of evidence on the trial from the learned Judge who presided at that trial. While he did not feel himself at liberty to interfere with the peculiar and exclusive province of the jury to weigh the evidence & therefore refused to set aside the verdict, because evidence had been given to the jury, which, if credited, was sufficient to authorize, if not require, conviction – *yet he distinctly declares that as a jurymen the whole evidence given would have left on his mind such a doubt of guilt and would have forced from him an acquittal* – and that as Governor of Virginia you would not hesitate to commute this punishment. Subsequent events have now added to this testimony of that learned and excellent Judge. *The painful fact that Trayer charged and convicted on the same evidence of the same crime, died on the gallows, with the constant affirmation of his entire innocence on his lips – professions believed by thousands to be true.*

Concerning the trial testimony of Edmund Perkins, Michie wrote:

In addition to all this I have been informed that the witness Perkins since leaving here and since his testimony was given in this cause was apprehended and imprisoned in Richmond and again in Petersburg – for what cause I know not. The impression he made on my mind was that I had never seen a worse man – a more deliberate scoundrel in the witness box. I was counsel for the prisoners, and may have formed too harsh a judgment of him – but was gratified to find that the impartial mind of the Judge had come to the same conclusion.

The governor, after reviewing the evidence from the trial of Henry T. Wilson, commuted his sentence from death to imprisonment in the State Penitentiary for a period of eighteen years.²³ This is an astonishing development in light of the fact that Wilson was tried under the same magistrate as Trayer, by the same jury, received the same verdict, and sentenced on exactly the same evidence. After



three months of incarceration in Staunton jail, Hemphill Trayer's execution had been carried out as planned on January 6, 1854. Official records of the execution and of his death have not been found, but a detailed description of the scene was published in the *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*.²⁴

Trayer suffered the penalty of the law, near this place, on Friday the 6th, in pursuance of the sentence. It is estimated that some five thousand persons were present, and among the number, we are sorry to say were a few females. The prisoner was taken from the jail to the place of execution in an open wagon, guarded by civil officers and the military company from Mt. Solon, and attended by several ministers of the Gospel, who had been unremitting in their attention to his spiritual interests. They reached the place of execution about 1 o'clock. Trayer appeared calm and collected, and ascended the platform with a firm step. After a prayer by the Rev. Messrs Castleman and Mitchell, and the singing of a hymn, in which the prisoner joined, permission was granted him to make any remarks that he desired. He advanced a step or two, and spoke in substance as follows: He stood on that platform to suffer for a crime, of which he was innocent. He knew nothing of the murder of Coleman, until the morning on which the body was discovered. He never was in Coleman's home previous to the murder – then he went there with several persons to see the corpse. Willson, he believed, knew nothing of the murder, nor did Perkins – both of them were at his house the night the crime is supposed to have been committed. As to the hammer, he denied that he ever owned a claw-hammer – admitted that he got a part of Moore's tools, but did not get a hammer, and said none of the tools had a mark on them. He charged several of the witnesses with perjury, and said the evidence of sixteen others was a mixture of truth and falsehood. He knew the people of Staunton suspected him of the crime; that he was closely watched and every word he uttered was caught up as evidence of his guilt.

He spoke a considerable time, protesting his innocence throughout, and concluded with a few words of admonition to those around him. After he ceased speaking, the officers proceeded to adjust the rope, and at the instance [*sic*] of the prisoner bound his eyes with a handkerchief previous to placing a cap over his head. At a given signal the cord sustaining the trap was severed and the unhappy man was launched into eternity. The body was delivered to the prisoner's friends who had provided a coffin and hearse to receive it.

A second article in the same issue of the newspaper carried an account of a protestation of innocence signed by Trayer the previous night after he was informed that there was no longer a possibility of reprieve from the governor for him.



I solemnly declare before these witnesses (Revs. T. Mitchell, T. T. Castleman and Sam'l Martin, and Mr. G. W. Campbell, being present) and the presence of God, before whom I shortly expect to appear to be judged for the deeds done in the body, that I am innocent of the murder of Wm. Coleman. I know nothing at all about it. The evidence of Perkins was positively false from the point where he said Wilson and myself came to him and said "come let's go and kill a man and steal some roasting ears," to the point where he represents me coming to him and Wilson on Sunday morning at the willows. I had never mentioned Coleman's name to Perkins before that time. I never owned the claw-hammer with which it is alleged Coleman was killed. I never owned a claw-hammer of any kind. He said he was the victim of a prejudiced community and perjured witnesses. That though such was the case, he freely forgave all, and would die in peace with them and he hoped in favor with God. – That he was willing to stake his eternal salvation in his innocence.

The *Republican Vindicator* newspaper carried a somewhat different description of the execution.²⁵ The article said, starting at the time the prisoner was accompanied from the jail to the gallows:

About 12 o'clock they prepared to proceed to the place of execution. Before leaving the Jail, Trayer stopped at Wilson's cell to bid him a final adieu. The scene was affecting. They clasped each other's hands, the big tear drops rushing profusely down their cheeks. Wilson said nothing, but wept as though the great deep of his heart was broken up, from which gushed forth the waters of sorrow and repentance. But Trayer, amid his gushing tears, exclaimed Farewell, my boy. We shall never meet again in this world, but God will forgive all your sins, and our happy spirits will meet in eternity. I die an innocent man.

The Sheriffs, Jailor, three ministers, and Trayer then entered the wagon, and preceded by the Mt. Solon Artillery Company, and other volunteers, proceeded to the gallows, which was erected about one mile east of Staunton on what is known as the Geiger lot, situate on the Richmond road. Here between eight and ten thousand persons had assembled of all colors, sizes and sexes, including at least one thousand females. Arrived at the ground, the prisoner, accompanied by the Revs. Castleman, Mitchell, and Martin, and Mr. Campbell ascended the scaffold. Several appropriate hymns were sung, which were succeeded by earnest and affecting prayers from Revs. Mitchell and Castleman, respectively, in which Trayer participated. Trayer then stepped forward and addressed the immense concourse about 15 minutes, asseverating his own and Wilson's innocence – stating that sixteen witnesses had sworn falsely. He mentioned several names of witnesses, as those who had perjured themselves. – He also said that he believed Perkins was innocent, and knew nothing



about the murder. But the substance of his remarks is the same as that given above. After he finished his remarks and bid a long and last farewell to numerous acquaintances standing immediately around, he said to Sheriff M. H. McCue, "come on." Instantly that officer, assisted by deputy Sheriffs Crawford, Coalter, Borman, Towberman, and Hanger, mounted the scaffold, adjusted the rope about his neck, and fixed the cap over his head and face. He requested Sheriff Crawford to take off the cap and tie his handkerchief over his eyes, which was done. – His hands retained the handcuffs which had been placed on them while he was in prison, his arms were tied from elbow to elbow behind him, and a rope run thence down to his feet, which were also tied. – In this position, dressed in his regular suit of black, the drop fell, and 25 minutes past one o'clock the spirit of Andrew Hemphill Trayer took its everlasting flight to the presence of God who gave it, there to receive its final sentence, and enter upon an eternal existence of happiness or misery. He met his fate calmly and composedly, and it is not for us to say whether he died an innocent or guilty man.

No official records of Trayer's death or burial have been located. Apparently, no newspaper obituary was published. He might have been buried in an unmarked and unrecorded grave in the new Thornrose Cemetery which had been dedicated in June of the previous year.

Several questions surrounding this case remain unanswered, even after the passage of over a century and a half. Foremost among those questions is: If Trayer and Wilson were found guilty of the same crime, why was Trayer executed and Wilson given only eighteen years imprisonment? And of course: Was Trayer wrongfully executed? There are some indications that he was.

The evidence presented during the trial was circumstantial at best. No solid evidence was introduced to positively identify the assailant/s of William Coleman. No substantial link was established between the apparent murder weapon and either Trayer or Wilson. Judge Thompson labeled the trial evidence as circumstantial.

The testimony of Edmund Perkins was questionable, as admitted also by Judge Thompson and as pointed out by Defense Counsel Michie. Perkins was recognized as a disreputable witness. Furthermore, the trial witness, Mrs. Peer, who had observed a man in Coleman's house the evening of the murder, was unfortunately unable to identify the man.

The weakness of the evidence and the unreliability of the testimonies at trial were probably major considerations in Governor



Johnson's decision to commute Wilson's sentence from death to limited imprisonment.

The timing of the official request for executive clemency and the incomplete information provided to the governor seem to have been major factors in the fact that Wilson was rescued from execution but Trayer was not.

Trayer unceasingly declared his own innocence from the day of his arrest until the very hour of his execution. Of course, many prisoners have also practiced perjury, and they most certainly would be inclined to do so if faced with a death penalty. Trayer also had a previous record with the law, although he had not been convicted of serious crime. On occasion he had been in court for selling "...by retail wine ardent spirits or a mixture thereof without any lawful license for so doing..."²⁶ He was also, at the time of his execution, under Grand Jury indictment for attempted assault and battery.²⁷ These charges no doubt served to damage his reputation in the community and perhaps to render him more vulnerable to public prejudice when he came to trial accused of murder. Nevertheless, there is evidence that many citizens ("thousands" according to Defense Counsel Michie) were sympathetic to the prisoners. One unsolicited sample of public opinion is offered in a friendly letter written by Mollie A. Watson of Staunton to her friend Rachel T. Bramham of Albemarle County.²⁸ Among Mollie's charming nineteenth century chitchat to her friend is a statement concerning the trial of Trayer and Wilson (italics and punctuation added).

You said that the people was so bad about here that you was afraid to come[.] I don't think there is any more danger here than there is any where else[.] it is true there is mean people in Staunton[.] but I read of as many mean people away from here as I hear of here[.] Trayer and Wilson will hang on Friday next[.] but Wilson is a tuckahoe[.] he was raised near Charlottesville[.] so you see all the mean people is not in staunton[.] but I reckon there is as many mean ones in staunton as you could find in any town the size of it. *A great many thinks that Trayer and Wilson are innocent of the murder of coleman.* Wilsons friends have sent on a petition to the Governor to reprieve Wilson and send him to the Penitentiary[.] but I don't know what will be done if the Governor don't reprieve[.] then they will hang next Friday[.] and it is awful to think of[.] they both declare they are innocent[.] and you know it is bad enough if they are guilty[.] and it is awful to think about hanging them if they are innocent[.] Wilson says when he is gone people may say. He was hung[.] but he says



they cant say he was guilty and tell the truth[.] I am truly sorry for them guilty or not and their relations I deeply simpathise with them.

Mollie's words might not reflect a generally held public opinion that the prisoners were innocent, but they do provide a candid, random sample of public opinion to that effect.

Finally, as a descendant of Andrew Hemphill and Jane Davis Trayer, I must wonder about Jane's feelings. The press seems to have ignored her. How did she feel while her world was tragically crumbling around her? Did she continue to love and support Hemphill, even as he was arrested, carried away to jail, tried, and convicted? What were her feelings and thoughts on the day her husband was put to death? Did she see him executed? Sadly, we have no hint of how she felt, save her act of naming her last son, born after his father's execution, Andrew Hemphill Trayer II, after his father. Perhaps in this tribute, Jane expressed the true convictions of her wounded heart.

Endnotes

¹J. Lewis Peyton, *History of Augusta County, Virginia*, 2nd ed., (Bridgewater, VA, 1953, 2nd Printing, C. J. Carrier Co., Harrisonburg, Va., 1972), 263. The executed man is named as Hemphill Trayer, one of the few Augusta County citizens who had "felt the halter draw."

²Jos. A. Waddell, *Annals of Augusta County, Virginia, From 1726 to 1871*, 2nd ed., (C. J. Carrier Co., Harrisonburg, Va., 1979), 445-446.

³"Daring Murder!" *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Aug. 17, 1853, 2). This newspaper first mentions the murder as soon as it was discovered and continued regular coverage until after the execution on 6 January 1854. Apparently dispatches were sent to the *Richmond Inquirer* and other Virginia newspapers. Even the *New York Times* carried an article headlined "Daring Murder in Staunton, Va." on Aug. 23, 1853.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Minutes of the Town Council of Staunton, Va., City of Staunton, 1849-1865, Monday, Aug. 15, 1853. Genealogical Society microfilm No. 33974.

⁶"Important Arrests," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Sept. 14, 1853, 2). In this article Trayer is incorrectly listed as a carpenter.

⁷"Acquitted," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Sept. 28, 1853, 2).

⁸U.S. Bureau of the Census, Enumeration of 1850, Augusta Co., Va., District 2 (Staunton), Dwelling and House 1401, July 30, 1850 (Ancestry.com microfilm Roll M432_934, Page 310, Image 202). Hemphill, the head of the household, is listed as a butcher, age forty-five, born in Virginia. Concerning his occupation, on several occasions in the 1840s, he had advertised his services in the *Staunton Spectator* as a butcher for Geiger's Slaughter House in Staunton (e.g., Nov. 21, 1844, 3).

⁹Marriage Bond, Augusta Co., Va, Oct. 25, 1834, for Andrew H. Trayer & Jane A. Davis. No marriage return was found. The bond notes that Jane's father was deceased. Permission was given by Nancy Davis, apparently Jane's mother.

¹⁰"Important Arrests," 2.

¹¹Augusta Co., Va., Common Law Order Book 5, 32.

¹²"Trial of Trayer and Wilson," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va, (Nov. 9, 1853, 2).

¹³Augusta Co., Va, Common Law Order Book 5, 45.

¹⁴"Trial of Trayer and Willson," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Nov. 23, 1853, 2).



¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶"The Murder Case," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Nov. 30, 1853, 2).

¹⁷Augusta County, Va., Common Law Order Book 5, 53.

¹⁸Commonwealth vs Trayer and Wilson, Bundle 147, Augusta County, Va. Included in this bundle are: a written indictment by Grand Jury foreman, John Newton; a record of a pre-trial hearing in September in which Trayer and Wilson were ordered to be held for trial; orders to the sheriff to issue summonses to potential trial jurors; and copies of the summonses issued for trial witnesses. Also among the papers in this bundle was a short letter from Staunton Mayor N.K. Trout to "his Excellency the Governor of Virginia," dated Jan. 2, 1854, requesting his intervention on behalf of Wilson. This letter was not found in the papers of the Governor in Richmond (note 20, below).

¹⁹"Andrew H. Trayer and Henry T. Willson," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Nov. 30, 1853, 2).

²⁰Letter from Thomas J. Michie to Virginia Governor Joseph Johnson, Executive Papers of Governor Joseph Johnson, Jan. 2, 1854 to Jan. 17, 1854, archives of the Library of Virginia, Richmond. The bundle consisted of incoming correspondence during this period. A request for any outgoing correspondence from the governor's office yielded nothing.

²¹"The Execution of Andrew H. Trayer," *The Republican Vindicator*, Staunton, Va., (Jan. 9, 1854, 1).

²²Letter from Thomas J. Michie to Governor Joseph Johnson, Executive Papers of Governor Joseph Johnson, Jan. 2, 1854 to Jan 17, 1854.

²³"Penalty Commuted," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (March 1, 1854, 2).

²⁴"Execution of Trayer," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser*, Staunton, Va., (Jan. 11, 1854, 2).

²⁵"The Execution of Andrew H. Trayer," *The Republican Vindicator*, Staunton, Va., (Jan. 9, 1854, 1).

²⁶Augusta County Common Law Order Book 5, 8-9.

²⁷Commonwealth vs. A. H. Trayer, Bundle 95, Augusta Co., Va. He was initially indicted in June 1844 under the name Alexander Hemphill Trayer. The error was subsequently corrected. An entry in Order Book 5, page 108, dated 1 June 1854, notes that the defendant was deceased and the case abated. Apparently it never came to trial.

²⁸Rachel Bramham Collection 1852-1890, Library of Virginia, Accession 3437, Box w/3401.



Fort Gower: Forgotten Shrine of Virginia History

by Jim Glanville © 2011

Introduction

In early November, 1774, an army of Virginians arrived back at the point of land formed by confluence of the Ohio and Hocking Rivers and to the makeshift base camp they had established several weeks earlier named Fort Gower.¹ In the interim they had been west in Ohio Indian territory. There they had made war on the Shawanee Indians and forced the treaty of Camp Charlotte on them. Back at Fort Gower, the officers of the army received anxiously-awaited news about the decisions of the First Continental Congress, which had concluded its deliberations in Philadelphia only a few days earlier. The news from Philadelphia was exciting: Congress had made strongly worded declarations asserting the rights of British Americans and called for addresses of both remonstrance and loyalty to the king.

On 5 November 1774, responding to the news from Philadelphia, the officers of the army made their own assertion of rights and addressed the king in what history calls the Fort Gower Resolves (see Appendix). We do not have a roll of the names of the men who adopted those Resolves, but we can deduce that among those officers were many Virginians who would go on to become famous during the Revolution. Present were William Campbell, George Rogers Clark, William Crawford, Simon Kenton, Andrew Lewis, Daniel Morgan, William Russell, Adam Stephen and many others.

It is the purpose of this article to thrust the Fort Gower Resolves into the limelight and demonstrate their influence on the course of American history. In the shadow of the American Revolution, the Resolves are today largely lost to sight. Nonetheless, they were consequential and significant. Their influence was seen almost immediately in the adoption of resolutions and assertions of rights by the

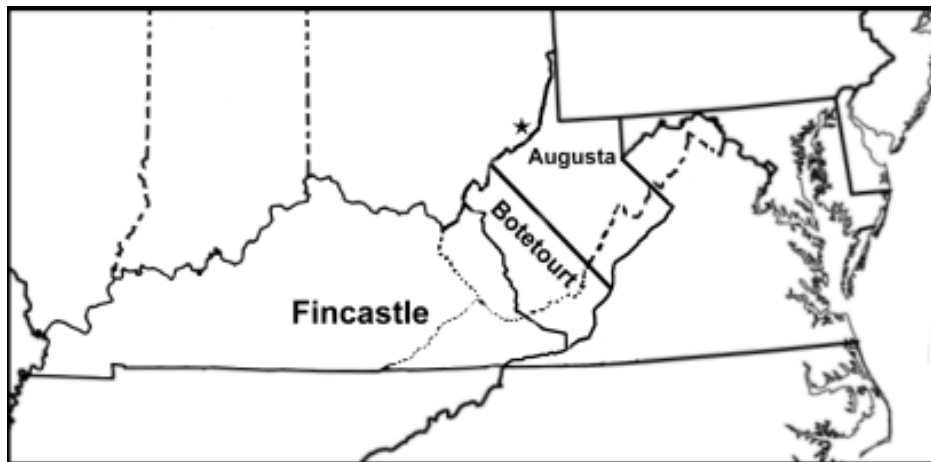


Virginia frontier counties of Augusta, Botetourt, and Fincastle, and by their impact on the thinking of Revolutionary Virginia leaders such as Richard Henry Lee. The Resolves rapidly became widely known throughout the Virginia colony as a result of their prompt publication in the 22 December 1774 edition of Purdie and Dixon's *Virginia Gazette*. Indeed they quickly became known in England, where they were read out loud during a parliamentary debate in the House of Lords in March of 1775.

The importance of the Resolves makes Fort Gower a true shrine of Virginia history. With that importance established, this article goes on to examine the incidental questions of exactly where that shrine was in 1774 and where it is now. The answers come in three parts: first, in telling what archaeology reveals about Fort Gower; second, by examining under which political jurisdiction Fort Gower was constructed, and in which is it now; and, third, by telling what happened when the author went looking for Fort Gower.

The Fort Gower Resolves

On 5 November 1774 the officers of Lord Dunmore's army gathered at Fort Gower "...for the Purpose of considering the Grievances of BRITISH AMERICA." On that day at that place the officers voted



The boundaries of the three frontier counties of western Virginia as they were circa 1774. Some present-day state boundaries are shown dotted for reference. The star shows the location of Fort Gower in Hockingport, Ohio,² which is about fifteen miles down the Ohio River from Parkersburg, West Virginia, on the Ohio, or west bank of the river, and only yards from the imaginary line that follows the river and divides the two modern states. (Author's diagram)



to adopt the Fort Gower Resolves.³ The adoption of the officers' Resolves was effectively the final act of Dunmore's War — the five-month Indian campaign of warfare against the Ohio Indian tribes undertaken by the Virginians in the summer and fall of 1774. It was a campaign mounted by the colony to permanently neutralize the depredations of those tribes along Virginia's western frontier and with the eventual objective to open western land for occupation and settlement by Virginians.

Arguably, the adoption of the Fort Gower Resolves was the first "official" action taken under the auspices of the First Continental Congress, which had concluded about a week earlier in Philadelphia, after being in session for almost two months.⁴ The officers at Fort Gower resolved faithful allegiance to George III but asserted, because the just rights of America outweighed all else, that they would fight for the defense of American Liberty, when called upon by their countrymen. The full text of their Resolves is reproduced in the Appendix.

Within a few weeks of their adoption, the Fort Gower Resolves had produced two significant consequences. First, the men of Virginia's three frontier counties of Augusta, Botetourt, and Fincastle adopted strongly worded county Resolutions.⁵ These resolutions followed in tone and spirit the Fort Gower Resolves, which is no surprise since many of the men on the frontier county committees who adopted these resolutions had been present at Fort Gower. Second, the exploits of the western Virginia riflemen in the Ohio country during Dunmore's War in 1774, and the self-confidence they exuded — "...our Men can march and shoot with any in the known World..." — in their written sentiments at the fort, encouraged Virginians such as Richard Henry Lee in the belief that Virginians could win a coming fight with the British.⁶ In a letter to his brother Arthur Lee, dated 24 February 1775, R. H. Lee wrote:

The inclosed Address to the Virginia Delegates published a few days since in the *Gazette* will shew you the spirit of the Frontier Men ... The six frontier Counties can produce 6000 of these Men who from their amazing hardihood, their method of living so long in the woods without carrying provisions with them, the exceeding quickness with which they can march to distant parts, and above all, the dexterity to which they have arrived in the use of the Rifle Gun.⁷

It is quite clear from Lee's remark about the men's "amazing hardihood" that he knew of the Fort Gower Resolves and their im-



plications. One of the few professional historians who has argued for the importance of the Fort Gower Resolves is the retired, Richmond-based professor, Harry Ward. Ward wrote about the Resolves in his biography of Adam Stephen, one of the officers present at their adoption, and the person who Ward regards as the likely author of the Resolves. Here is what Ward wrote:

The fusing of a military stance and the rhetoric of liberty in the "Fort Gower Resolutions" at this time is significant, anticipating the *rage militaire* in a little more than a year and the "Spirit of 76." The document exudes the officers' confidence in their military ability and their sense of fraternal pride. It expresses unstinted patriotism, which was intended to counter apprehensions of the dangers of calling forth a strong regular army.⁸

The Historical Background

In March 1774, at a time of growing unrest in the American colonies, the British parliament passed an act closing the port of Boston. Other "Coercive Acts," aimed principally at Massachusetts, soon followed. On 13 May Bostonians met at Faneuil Hall, resolved to boycott all British goods, and called on the other colonies for support and assistance. Virginians were closely following events in Massachusetts through a Committee of Intercolonial Correspondence established a year earlier. On 24 May 1774, the Virginia House of Burgesses adopted a resolution naming 1 June, the day the port of Boston was to be closed, as a Virginia day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

Two days later Virginia Governor Dunmore dissolved the House of Burgesses and on the following day, 27 May, eighty-nine members of the just-dissolved House of Burgesses met at the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg, formed an "Association" to defend "the constitutional rights and liberty of British America" and proposed an annual "general congress" of the colonies. This newly-constituted Association then issued a summons to all the members of the former House of Burgesses to attend a Virginia convention to be held on 1 August 1774 in Williamsburg. This Virginia convention took place as planned, but in the meantime, Governor Dunmore had departed for Ohio.⁹

From July to November 1774 the military campaign known to history as Dunmore's War played out in western Virginia.¹⁰ John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore and Viscount Fincastle, was a Scot who had been appointed governor of Virginia in 1771. Dunmore person-



ally led the northern wing of the Virginia army that went to the Ohio country. Dunmore collected men from the Virginia counties of Hampshire, Dunmore (later renamed Shenandoah), and Augusta. For the southern wing of the army, its leader Andrew Lewis collected men from Fincastle and Botetourt counties, and also, like Dunmore, from Augusta County. By the end of September, Dunmore and a force of 700 men had moved by canoes and flatboats down the Ohio River to Fort Fincastle (modern Wheeling). There, Dunmore's command was joined by about 800 men led by William Crawford and Adam Stephen. The combined force proceeded down river and established Fort Gower at Hockingport in early October.¹¹

On the southern flank, Andrew Lewis commanding the lower wing of Dunmore's army gathered about 1,000 men at Camp Union at the Great Levels (present-day Lewisburg, West Virginia), and left



Building Fort Gower. Detail from one of the series of murals painted between 2006 and 2010 by artists employed by the Robert Dafford Company on the outside of the flood wall at Point Pleasant, West Virginia. The Ohio River can be seen curving in the center of the picture; the course of its tributary, the Hocking River, runs to the right. This "artist's conception" would be appropriately dated to about the first week of October 1774. It is described by the artist in the following words "... we show Lord Dunmore crossing the Ohio, building Fort Gower, and preparing to march his army of a thousand men to meet Lewis in central Ohio."¹² (Author's photograph)



from there to advance up the Kanawha Valley to the Ohio River. It was this southern wing of the army that first clashed with the Indians and bore the brunt of the fighting at the Battle of Point Pleasant — at the confluence of the Kanawha and Ohio Rivers — on 10 October 1774.

After Lewis and his men had regrouped, his wing of the army joined Dunmore's wing that had already advanced west into central Ohio to attack the Indian towns there. On 20 October 1774, near the present-day Chillicothe, Ohio, Dunmore and the Indian chiefs concluded the conflict by signing the Treaty of Camp Charlotte. As a consequence of Dunmore's War, Indian power in the Ohio country went into a steep decline.

Augusta County Men at Point Pleasant

The names of some of the several hundred men from Augusta County who fought at Point Pleasant are well known. Indeed many of the names are cited on the plaque affixed to the Point Pleasant memorial obelisk. History records only the names of a few of the many officers who were present when the Fort Gower Resolves were adopted. John Robbins identified about twenty officers, including men with well-known names such as George Rogers Clark and Daniel Morgan, who, as Robbins notes, went on to become "frontier movers and shakers" during the war for independence.¹³ The genealogical writers Skidmore and Kaminsky provide many names of Dunmore's officers located on militia rolls.¹⁴ I was able to identify some of the Fincastle men who were present (or, in the case of William Christian, absent) at the adoption of the Resolves in my article about the Fincastle Resolutions (cited in endnote 3). Even though we cannot definitely establish their presence through contemporary documentary records, it is probable that many of the Augusta officers who fought at Point Pleasant were among those men who adopted the Resolves at Fort Gower.

Archaeologists and Historians Search for Fort Gower

Fort Gower lies on or near the point of land between the Hocking River and the Ohio River, as shown on the map in figure 6. Archaeological investigations to locate the site of the fort were instigated circa 1974 by the Ohio American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. A preliminary report of the exploratory archaeological sur-



The obelisk at Point Pleasant, above left, commemorates the 10 October 1774 battle there. The commanding officer (of 648 men) of the Augusta Regiment was Colonel Charles Lewis who was killed at the battle. The statue of the frontiersman symbolizes the Virginians who fought and died at the Battle of Point Pleasant. The names of those lost are listed on the plaque seen to the left of the statue of the frontiersman. The plaque, above right, records the names of the Augusta men who fought at Point Pleasant. In addition to the Augusta regimental commander, Colonel Charles Lewis, the Augusta captains of companies listed are John Dickinson, George Moffatt, George Mathews, John Skidmore, John Lewis, Samuel McDowell, Alexander McClennahan, Andrew Lockridge, Samuel Wilson, Benjamin Harrison, and William Nalle. Also listed are men from the Botetourt County regiment, the Fincastle County battalion, and independent companies. (Author's photographs)

vey made by a team from Defiance College described the archaeological findings in trenches dug at the point and included a thorough review of the historical literature and land survey data.¹⁵

Professor Robert Boehm, the chairman of Defiance College's Division of Social Sciences, made the historians' final report of the search for Fort Gower.¹⁷ Defiance College's professor of history and archaeology Randall Buchman made the final archaeology report.¹⁸ Two significant conclusions that Randall reached were: 1. That the lack of



Figure 5. The point of land between the Hocking and Ohio Rivers, site of Fort Gower. A detail from the United States Geological Survey Map of the Coolville Quadrangle, Ohio, created in 1958; modified in 1998. Online at http://www.archive.org/details/usgs_drg_oh_39081_b7. The map in figure 6 scales to 1,800 yards from north to south and 1,000 yards from east to west. North is at the top of the map. The Ohio River flows southwest from the right hand edge of the map toward the bottom edge. The Hocking River flows south from the top edge of the map to its confluence with the Ohio. The dashed-and-dotted line on the Ohio River is the modern state boundary line that separates Athens County, Ohio, from Wood County, West Virginia (Wood County is seen in the lower righthand corner of the map). The measured perpendicular distance across the Ohio River from the point to Wood County is 382 yards.¹⁶ The state boundary line is about 175 feet offshore from the point. (U.S. government image)



any archaeological evidence for Fort Gower at any distance away from the Ohio River suggests that the fort stood close to the water's edge, and 2. That erosion in the wake of twentieth century dam construction on the Ohio River has caused the point to lose land. Randall wrote "With the loss of 210 feet from 1913 to 1963 it is quite possible that the southern portion of the fort could easily be eroded away." (p. 34).

In summary, the exact site of Fort Gower is not definitely known and the best archeological guess is that the fort site is today under the Ohio River not far offshore from the present-day point. Remarkably, in early 2005 the potential site of Fort Gower became exposed as a result of an unexpected drop in the water level of the Ohio River. In its present form, the Ohio is really not so much a river as a series of connected pools of water. It is the Belleville Dam, located four-and-a-half miles downstream from Hockingport that maintains the pool of water that

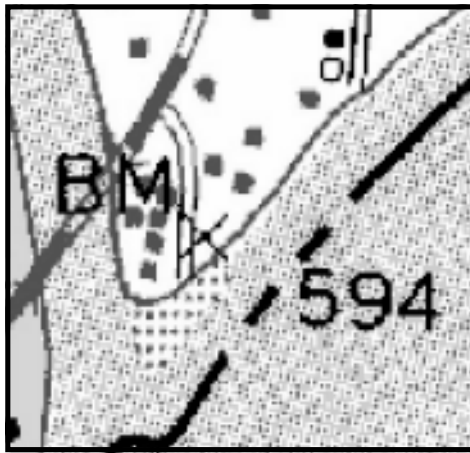


Figure 6. A further detail from the United States Geological Survey Map of the Coolville Quadrangle, Ohio, created in 1958; modified in 1998. Online at http://www.archive.org/details/usgs_drg_oh_39081_b7. The stippled area (purple colored on the original map) off of the present-day point was an update to the 1958 edition of the map when it was revised in 1998. That time frame, of course, correctly brackets the 1968 date that the Army Corps of Engineers tells that the pool reached full height behind the Belleville Dam.

inundated the Fort Gower site when the pool reached its planned level in 1968.¹⁹ In January 2005 an accident involving an errant tow of coal barges that jammed the dam preventing the proper closing of its gates of the dam. For a few days, the level of the pool dropped about fifty feet. After reading the first draft of this article it was Lantz Repp (about whom more is discussed below) who told the author about this event, adding he had some photographs he had taken at the time. A search for information about the drawdown quickly led to the discovery of an excellent article by the Ohio Department of Transportation engineers Chris Merklin and Jason Wise.²⁰ The drawdown produced serious problems for the engineers to deal with because

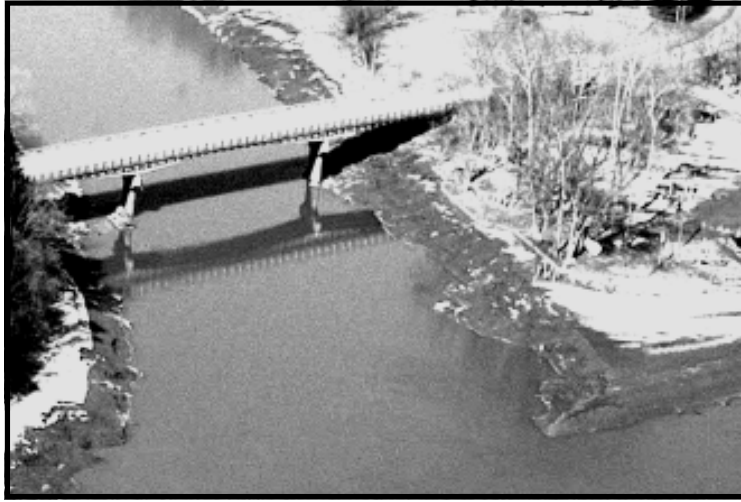


Figure 7. Aerial photograph of the confluence of the Hocking and Ohio Rivers during the drawdown. Picture taken in January 2005 by Alan Craig from a helicopter operated by the Ohio Department of Transportation. The contrast has been enhanced in this black and white image made from a portion of the original, colored jpg file image. (Used with permission of the Ohio Department of Transportation.)

the loss of water pressure against the sides of the pool caused landslide and severe damage to roadways paralleling the river.

In figure 6, a magnified image of a portion of the United States Geological Survey map from figure 5 shows the very probable site of Fort Gower as the stippled area just off of the point. Figure 7 is an aerial photograph of the point taken during the drawdown from a helicopter of the Ohio Department of Transportation. Figure 8 is one of Lantz Repp's pictures taken during the drawdown.

The Author's Search for Fort Gower

Having learned of the significance of the Fort Gower Resolves, in the Fall of 2009 I traveled to Fort Gower where I discovered how very obscure and difficult it is to find. Upon arrival in Hockingport, no signs announced Fort Gower, and asking a man on a tractor who was cleaning roadside brush about the fort drew only a blank stare. However, driving down to the end of the point and looking around on my own solved the problem. A photograph of the point at Hockingport taken by the author on Friday 23 October 2009 is shown in figure 9. Wandering among the point's community of retirement/vacation homes I finally



Figure 8. One of Lantz Repp's pictures of the point of land taken during the drawdown in January 2005. The normal shore line is the row of bulwarks seen near the trees at the left edge of the picture. There is a very high probability that Fort Gower lies under the snow field to the right of the bulwarks on the point. (Picture courtesy of Lantz Repp.)



Figure 9. The confluence of the Hocking River and the Ohio River seen on a dreary, rainy day on Friday 23 October 2009. The Ohio River is to the right (east) and the Hocking River flows into the Ohio from the left, in front of the group of trees that covers the point. (Author's photograph)

Figure 10. The "resurrected" Fort Gower and Lantz Repp. The site of Fort Gower is not easy to find. It was only by driving around the community of retirement/vacation homes on the point that the author finally found the site by stumbling on the sign on Repp's "pole" building. (Author's photograph)



found the sign shown in figure 10 that reads “Fort Gower, Hockingport, Ohio. Original November 5, 1774. Resurrected [sic] November 5, 2008.” Knocking on the wrong door produced directions to knock on the right door. Thus it was that I found Lantz Repp and what he calls his “pole” building, or the utility building behind his home.

After a useful discussion, Repp shared his file of information with the author and directed him to the Daughters of the American Revolution Fort Gower plaque beside Ketchum’s convenience store (figure 11). The commemorative plaque and its transcription are shown below and on the next page.



Figure 11. Ketchum’s convenience store in Hockingport, Ohio. The Daughters of the American Revolution bronze plaque commemorating the Fort Gower Resolves is mounted on the pink granite plinth at the left of the picture. (Author’s photograph).

This brass plaque erected in 1923 by the Daughters of the American Revolution records the significance of the Fort Gower site to American history. It stands beside the parking lot and gasoline pumps of Ketchum’s convenience store. The map coordinates of the marker are



39.188185° north of the equator and 81.752192° west of Greenwich. (Author’s photograph) A transcription of the legend on the brass plaque recording the significance of what happened at Fort Gower in November 1774 is on the next page. In the eighth line, it appears that something was deleted, apparently before the plaque was erected.²¹ This is the only marker recording the location of Fort Gower.



NEAR THIS SITE STOOD
FORT GOWER
ERECTED IN 1774
HERE WAS EXPRESSED THE
SPIRIT OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE
ON NOVEMBER 5, 1774
WHEN THE OFFICERS OF
LORD DUNMORE, [UNREADABLE]
LAST ROYAL GOVERNOR OF THE
OLD DOMINION
DECLARED THEY WOULD BE LOYAL
TO KING GEORGE III, SO LONG AS HE
REIGNED JUSTLY
OVER THE PEOPLE OF THE COLONIES.
THAT FIRST, HOWEVER, CAME THEIR
LOVE FOR AMERICA
AND THEIR DUTY IN THE DEFENSE OF
THEIR COUNTRY.
[SPINNING WHEEL INSIGNIA OF THE DAR]
OHIO
ERECTED BY
THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
NOVEMBER 5, 1923

Conclusions

The evidence presented here is compelling. It convincingly establishes the significance of the events that took place at the fort in November 1774 for Virginia history. The brief congregation of so many men who would go on to play important and substantial roles in the coming Revolution was a remarkable and notable occurrence.

Given its location, obscurity, and lack of signs directing tourists to it, Fort Gower must surely be one of the least visited shrines of Virginia history, unlike other shrines of the Virginia Revolutionary War history in Virginia, such as Yorktown, St. John's Church in Richmond where Patrick Henry made his famous "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death" speech or the site of the Battle of Petersburg, in Petersburg.



The approximate location of its site is not in doubt though its exact location remains uncertain. With the best archaeological guess being that the fort site is located offshore of the present-day point, some interesting possibilities arise. With the twentieth-century shoreline erosion (or inundation) being estimated at 210 feet and with the modern-day state boundary line being about 175 feet offshore from the point, it's quite conceivable that Fort Gower straddled the present-day line between Ohio and West Virginia. Given the cited distance estimates, a good argument can be made that it was built in present-day West Virginia. If this latter speculation were to be true, then we can reach the ironic conclusion that the Fort Gower site actually remained in Virginia after the formation of the State of Ohio from the Northwest Territory in 1803 — at least until the time of separation of Virginia's western counties to form West Virginia in 1863.

The final conclusion is that Fort Gower was built in Augusta County and not the West Augusta District that some authors have stated to have been created in October 1773.²² It is certain, though, that the boundaries of the West Augusta District were not ascertained until 1776,²³ or two years after the construction of Fort Gower. However, the detailed proof of that case belongs in a separate article.

Speculatively, I argue that if Richard Henry Lee had not by March of 1775 developed such a high level of confidence in the quantity and ability of Virginia's western riflemen events might have transpired differently in St. John's church at the Second Virginia Convention, when Patrick Henry delivered his "liberty or death" speech. It is noteworthy that one of Henry's brothers-in-law, William Campbell, was present for the adoption of the Resolves while a second Henry brother-in-law, William Christian, left Fort Gower only a few days before their adoption.

Therefore, what happened at Fort Gower on 5 November 1774 was profoundly significant.

Acknowledgments

My thanks and acknowledgments go to the following people: Lantz Repp for sharing his file of Fort Gower documents and pictures with the author. John Robbins for useful discussions and reviewing an earlier version of this article. Jason Merklin and Andy Moreland of the Ohio Department of Transportation who tracked



down the aerial photograph. Mary Kegley and Ryan Mays kindly reviewed an earlier version of this article. Professor Harry Ward for useful discussions and for reinforcing many of the author's opinion. Professor Dan Metraux and Carolyn Harris whose general comments and detailed comments, respectively, on an earlier draft strengthened this article significantly. Carolyn Harris also edited the final draft of this article. Special thanks, as always to Deena Flinchum for her ongoing support. The errors, misconceptions, and infelicities that remain in this article are the sole responsibility of its author.

Endnotes

¹Tradition says that the fort took its name from Granville Leveson-Gower, a prominent English politician, known also as Earl Gower, who was Lord President of the Council from 1767-1779.

²One can locate the position of the Fort Gower Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) commemorative marker in Hockingport by inserting the coordinates 39.188185, -81.752192 (in that format) into the search line of a web atlas such as Bing or Google Maps. The site of Fort Gower is somewhere near the point of land about 250 yards SSW of the DAR marker.

³Benjamin Ashby, clerk, "At a Meeting of the officers Under the Command of his Excellency the Right Honourable the EARL of DUNMORE...". *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie and Dixon), December 22, 1774, 1-2. Online at <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/BrowseVG.cfm>. Reproduced here in the appendix to this article.

⁴The "Articles of Association" adopted by the Congress on 20 October 1774 called for, among other things, local committees to be formed to act in the interests of the colonies. Dunmore's officers in effect formed such a committee. See: U.S. Congress, Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress, October 14, 1774, (Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale University), online at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/resolves.asp.

⁵Jim Glanville, "The Fincastle Resolutions." *The Smithfield Review*, 14: 69-119, 2010.

⁶Jim Glanville, "Leedstown and Fincastle." Paper published online at the website of the Essex County Museum and Historical Society at <http://www.essexmuseum.org/pdf/lib/leedstown.pdf>.

⁷James Curtis Ballagh, collector and editor, *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee*. Two volumes. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), volume 1, 131-132.

⁸Harry M. Ward, *Major General Adam Stephen and the Cause of American Liberty*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia 1989), 112.

⁹Standard sources for Dunmore's War include: Alexander Scott Withers, *Chronicles of Border Warfare* [1831] edited and annotated by Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cincinnati: The Robert Clarke Company, 1895); Joseph Addison Waddell, *Annals of Augusta County, Virginia, from 1726 to 1871*, second edition (Staunton: C. Russell Caldwell, 1902); and, Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg. *Documentary History of Dunmore's War, Compiled from the Draper Manuscripts*. (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1905).

¹⁰Other sources for Dunmore's War include Virgil Anson Lewis' *History of the Battle of Point Pleasant: ... The Chief Event of Lord Dunmore's War* (Charleston WV: The Tribune Printing Company, 1908); Elizabeth Van Wrick, "Dunmore - Virginia's Last Royal Governor," *West Virginia History*, 8 (1947): 237-282; and, Patricia Givens Johnson, *General Andrew Lewis of Roanoke and Greenbrier* (Blacksburg, Va.: Walpa Publishing, 2nd. ed. 1994), 165-185.

¹¹Charles M. Walker, *History of Athens County, Ohio*. (Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1869). See also: Anonymous. "Dunmore's War in Athens County." *Ohio Genealogy and History*. Online at http://www.ohiogenealogy.org/athens/dunmores_war.htm.

¹²Robert Dafford, Description of the Point Pleasant Series of Murals. Online at http://www.robertdaffordmurals.com/Work_In_Progress.htm. Copy in the author's files.

¹³John E. Robbins, "The Fort Gower Resolves November 5, 1774," 21-26 in Thomas H. Smith, ed. *Ohio in the American Revolution: a conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Ft. Gower Resolves*, (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1976).

¹⁴Warren Skidmore and Donna Kaminsky, *Lord Dunmore's little war of 1774: his captains and*



their men who opened up Kentucky & the West to American settlement, (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 2002).

¹⁵Randall L. Buchman and Robert B. Boehm, eds., *The Preliminary Report of the Exploratory Archaeological Survey of Fort Gower (AT-33)*, (Defiance, Ohio: Defiance College, 1975). Copy in author's files.

¹⁶The online Daft Logic "Google Maps Distance Calculator" gives the result 0.217 miles for the width of the Ohio River at the point. See <http://www.daftlogic.com/projects-google-maps-distance-calculator.htm>.

¹⁷Robert B. Boehm, "Fort Gower," 26-30 in Thomas H. Smith, ed., *Ohio in the American Revolution: a conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Fort. Gower Resolves*, (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1976). This interesting piece of work sadly lacks footnotes or references, although some of them can be guessed from the bibliography of the preliminary report.

¹⁸Randall L. Buchman, "Archaeological Work at Fort Gower, (At-33)," 30-34 in Thomas H. Smith, ed. *Ohio in the American Revolution: a conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Ft. Gower resolves*, (Columbus: Ohio Historical Society 1976).

¹⁹U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, "Belleville Locks and Dam," Online at http://www.lrh.usace.army.mil/_kd/go.cfm?destination=Page&Pge_ID=1151.

²⁰Christopher Merklin and Jason Wise, "Landslides Induced by Rapid Drawdown at Belleville Dam," paper presented at the Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference, (Columbus, Ohio, 25 October 2006). Copy in author's files.

²¹Lantz Repp (personal communication, telephone conversation 2 December 2010) examined the plaque while the author studied a magnified picture of his file photograph of the plaque. The conversation did not yield any conclusion as to why the eighth line of the inscription is defaced.

²²Thomas Perkins Abernethy, *Western Lands and the American Revolution*, (New York: Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, for the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, University of Virginia, 1937), 94.

²³William Waller Hening, "An act for ascertaining the boundary between the county of Augusta, and the district of West Augusta, and for dividing the said district into three distinct counties," Laws of Virginia, October 1776. Chapter XLV, 262. *The statutes at large: being a collection of all the laws of Virginia*. Volume IX. 1775-1778, (Charlottesville: Jamestown Foundation and the University of Virginia 1969, [1823]).

Appendix

The Fort Gower Resolves

At a Meeting of the Officers under the Command of his Excellency the Right Honourable the EARL of DUNMORE, convened at Fort Gower*, November 5, 1774, for the Purpose of considering the Grievances of BRITISH AMERICA, an Officer present addressed the Meeting in the following Words:

* Situated the Junction of the Ohio and Hockhocking Rivers, 200 miles below Fort Dunmore. [It is actually about 120 miles below, author.]

GENTLEMEN: "Having now concluded the Campaign, by the Assistance of Providence, with Honour and Advantage to the Colony, and ourselves, it only remains that we should give our Country the strongest Assurance that we are ready, at all Times, to the utmost of our Power, to maintain and defend her just Rights and Privileges. We have lived about three Months in the Woods, without any intelligence from Boston, or from the Delegates at Philadelphia. It is possible, from the groundless Reports of designing Men, that our Countrymen may be jeal-



ous of the Use such a Body would make of Arms in their Hands at this critical Juncture. That we a[r]e a respectable Body is certain, when it is considered that we can live Weeks without Bread or Salt, that we can sleep in the open Air without any Covering but that of the Canopy of Heaven, and that our Men can march and shoot with any in the known World. Blessed with these Talents, let us solemnly engage to one another, and our Country in particular, that we will use them to no Purpose but for the Honour and Advantage of America in general, and of Virginia in particular. It behooves us then, for the Satisfaction of our Country, that we should give them our real Sentiments, by Way of Resolves, at this very alarming Crisis.”

Whereupon the Meeting made Choice of a Committee to draw up and prepare Resolves for their Consideration, who immediately withdrew; and after some Time spent therein, reported, that they had agreed to, and prepared the following Resolves, which were read, maturely considered, and agreed to *nemine contradicente*, by the Meeting, and ordered to be published in the Virginia Gazette:

Resolved, that we will bear the most faithful Allegiance to his Majesty King George III, whilst his Majesty delights to reign over a brave and free People; that we will, at the Expense of Life, and every Thing dear and valuable, exert ourselves in Support of the Honour of his Crown and the Dignity of the British empire. But as the Love of Liberty, and Attachment to the real Interests and just Rights of America outweigh every other Consideration, we resolve that we will exert every Power within us for the Defence of American Liberty, and for the Support of her just Rights and Privileges; not in any precipitate, riotous, or tumultuous Manner, but when regularly called forth by the unanimous Voice of our Countrymen.

Resolved, that we entertain the greatest Respect for his Excellency the Right Honourable Lord Dunmore, who commanded the Expedition against the Shawanese; and who, we are confident, underwent the great Fatigue of this singular Campaign from no other Motive than the true Interest of this Country.

Signed by Order, and in Behalf of the whole corps,
BENJAMIN ASHBY, Clerk.

The transcription is taken from Purdie and Dixon's Virginia Gazette, of 22 December 1774, 1-2. see endnote 3 for the online citation.



Seventy-five years of parks and scenic roads: Shenandoah, Skyline Drive, and the Blue Ridge Parkway

by David E. Whisnant
and Anne Mitchell Whisnant

Anne Mitchell Whisnant spoke on the history of the Blue Ridge Parkway at the ACHS Spring Meeting held on May 16, 2010, at Summit Square in Waynesboro. An historian from Chapel Hill, she spent more than a decade delving into the almost forgotten history of the parkway before authoring Super-scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History. She and her husband, historian David E. Whisnant, have collaborated on historical research and writing for the National Park Service. In 2010 they collaborated on a children's book about the parkway, When the Parkway Came.

Augusta County residents live at the meeting point of three of the East Coast's most spectacular scenic treasures: Skyline Drive, Shenandoah National Park, and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The latter two are currently celebrating their seventy-fifth anniversaries. In the pages that follow, we ponder how these treasures came to be where they are, how they relate to each other, how roads and parks fit together, and some of the issues surrounding the public commemoration of such anniversary events at a time when the parks' need for public support has never been greater.

From Yellowstone to Shenandoah: Bringing National Parks to the East

Until 1919, nearly a half-century after the birth of our first national park (Yellowstone, 1872), "National Park" meant a large park located somewhere in the western states. Anyone from east of the Mississippi who wanted to visit a national park had to travel at least a thousand miles to do so.



To be sure, such travel rewarded visitors with vast arrays of spectacular scenery: canyons, geysers, waterfalls, glaciers, mountains, volcanic landscapes, and dramatic geological formations. But at length the problem came to be that nearly two-thirds of the population lived in the east, with the center of population lying forty miles southwest of Indianapolis.¹

Attention to the imbalance began soon after the birth of the National Park Service. Its first director Stephen Mather began to encourage the building of parks in the east, partly to shore up Congressional support for the still young federal agency.² “I should like to see,” Mather wrote in his 1923 annual report on the national parks, “additional national parks east of the Mississippi There should be a typical section of the Appalachian Range established as a national park”³

Mather’s suggestion resonated within the southern Appalachian region. More than twenty years earlier, in 1899, leaders from southern, western and New England states had organized the Appalachian National Park Association (ANPA) to push for a national park in the Blue Ridge or Great Smoky Mountains.⁴ A report from the Secretary of Agriculture in 1901 put the federal position clearly: EASTERN STATES ARE ENTITLED TO A NATIONAL PARK.⁵

The ANPA’s urgency was impelled partly by rapacious logging in the mountains. Western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia were being timbered relentlessly. The Hassinger Lumber Company opened huge operations on 30,000 acres in Virginia’s Washington County in 1905, and by the 1920s, industrial loggers had clearcut nearly sixty percent of the Great Smoky Mountains area. Much of what loggers left, fires and floods finished off.

ANPA’s efforts were widely applauded, but they were also strongly opposed by lumber interests. The lumbermen, opposed to removing lands from logging, preferred national *forests* – where cutting was permitted – instead of parks. Confronted by this opposition, the southern Appalachian park movement took a new form as a movement for a southern Appalachian forest preserve.⁶ Public pressure from various quarters continued, however, and eastern parks began to be authorized and developed.

Designing and Building Parks: East and West

Authorizing new parks was one challenge, but bringing them into being quite another. Eastern parks had to be designed, and made to function, differently from western ones. Before there were driveable



road networks, western visitors – most coming a considerable distance – had to be transported to the parks, and housed and fed while they visited. Those needs led to early collaboration among the parks, railroads, and private business.

The railroad came to Yellowstone only two years after the park opened, and the privately built National Hotel soon boasted a Steinway piano and a French chef. Other private businesses rushed in to serve visitors' needs.⁷ Road networks also had to be constructed within the parks to move visitors from one spectacular vista to another.

Promoting and providing for auto travel from one western park to another also became a matter of Park Service policy. The National Park-to-Park Highway Association was formed in 1916 to promote such travel. By 1920, eleven states were involved in promoting a 6,000-mile park-to-park route.

In the East, however, likely locations for parks lay close to tens of millions of people, who could travel to them by auto over existing roads, rendering transportation contracts with railroads unnecessary. And since such sites had long been crisscrossed by roads, new internal networks were not needed. Tourist inns and resort hotels had also been available for many decades; whatever new lodging the Park Service chose to build would need only to augment them.

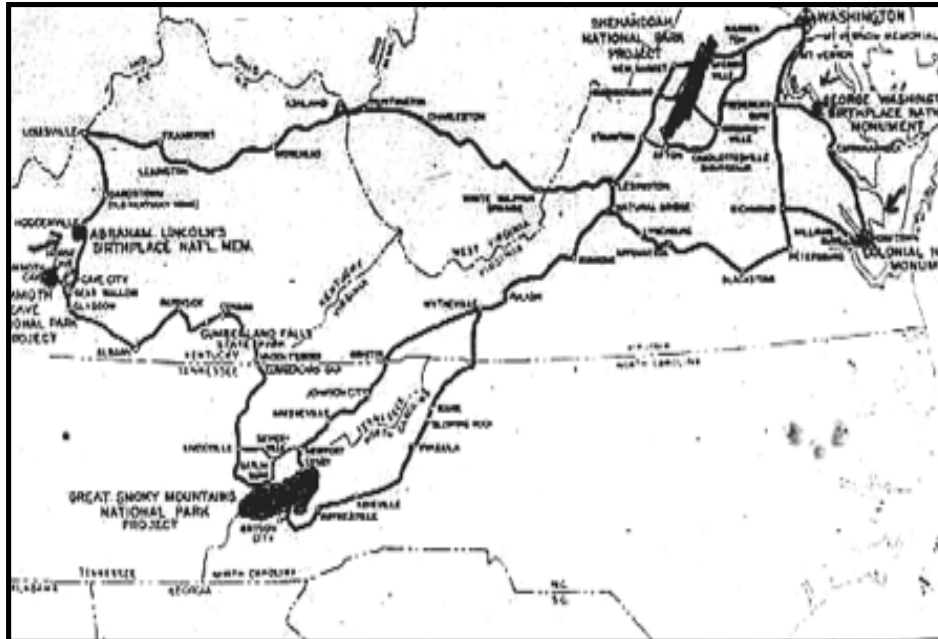
It did turn out to make sense, however, to build one park-to-park road in the east, and several other parkways. Within a dozen years of Mather's call for new eastern parks, both Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway were under construction.

"Back to Nature": Acquiring Land and Removing Inhabitants

Of the five new eastern units of the national parks system authorized between 1919 and 1933, two had had earlier incarnations that allowed them to be brought into existence rather easily and quickly.

Maine's offshore Acadia National Park was born in 1916 as Sieur de Monts National Monument. It became Lafayette National Park in 1919, and was renamed Acadia in 1929. Its nearly 40,000 acres had been slowly assembled by John D. Rockefeller and other wealthy local residents after 1915, with a view toward establishing a national park. All of the land was donated by private owners, who then voluntarily moved away.

The Hot Springs area of Arkansas, federally designated as Hot Springs Reservation in 1832 and as a national park in 1921, had a long



Eastern National Park Association map for proposed Eastern National Park to Park Highway, April 1931. (Historic Photograph Collection, National Park Service)

history of health-seeking visitors. Native Americans had gathered there for 8,000 years, and the first white settler took up residence in 1807. By 1921, road networks were well established, and since the new park consisted of less than 900 acres, acquisition costs and difficulties were minimal.

For the larger parks, however, two questions loomed: How to assemble and acquire such vast acreages, and what to do about the thousands of people already living there. Shenandoah was to encompass nearly 200,000 acres assembled from more than 3,000 individual tracts, Great Smoky Mountains more than 500,000, Mammoth Cave about 52,000, and Blue Ridge Parkway about 82,000. Acquiring those lands by eminent domain entailed considerable conflict and legal maneuvering, the residues of which in some cases lingered for decades.

A further difficulty followed from the Park Service decision that current inhabitants had to be removed in order to return the areas to their “natural” state.

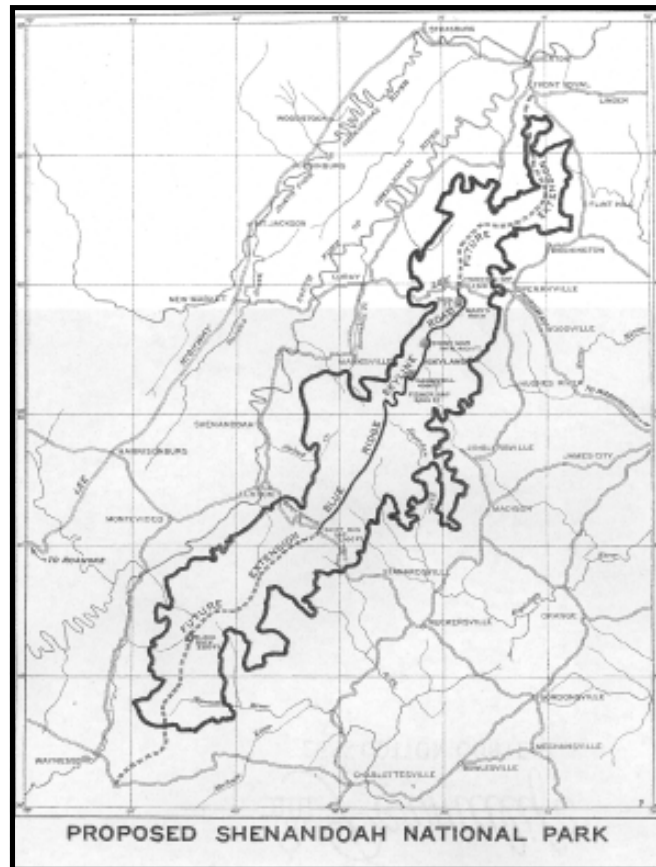
Long before white inhabitants began to be removed from eastern national park sites, of course, Native Americans had suffered a similar fate. The most famous case was the Cherokee “Trail of Tears”



removal in 1838, but Native Americans were also later removed from Yellowstone, Glacier, and Yosemite National Parks.⁸

Considerable land was taken by eminent domain for the Blue Ridge Parkway, but since those land purchases were required for a 469-mile, narrow “elongated park” rather than for a large, fairly compact park boundary, no large-scale removals were necessary. Instead, landowners complained about the disruption caused by an inaccessible road through their property and tussled over Parkway routing and access rights.

Massive removals from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (some 5,600 people) sparked conflict and left longstanding bitterness, especially in the Cades Cove and Cataloochee areas.⁹ Upwards of 500 families were removed from Shenandoah National Park. In recent years, the coming of new laws and policies, as well as new historical scholarship and new awareness among Park Service staff, has motivated some reinterpretation of these painful episodes.





President Franklin Roosevelt arrives at the Shenandoah National Park Dedication, July 1936. (National Park Service Historic Photo Collection)



The first visitor to the Shenandoah National Park in July of 1936. (National Park Service Historic Photo Collection)



Early visitors to the Skyline Drive are seen, top photo and bottom photo, in 1936. The photo to the right shows a signpost at one of the CCC camps that supplied labor to finish the work on the scenic highway. (National Park Service Historic Photo Collection)





Roads and the National Parks

Much of the traveling and vacationing public associates national parks with dramatic, unspoiled nature. And well they should, for within the nearly four hundred units of the national parks system there are countless dramatic vistas. For the most part, however, one gets to those vistas over carefully placed and skillfully engineered park roads, many of which traverse those treasured landscapes.

To both provide these essential roads while preserving the magnificent vistas is a perennial challenge. Views on how best to do that have changed through the nearly a century and a half we have had national parks.

National Parks and the Coming of the Automobile

By the time the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway were under construction in the 1930s, cities and states had already been creating local parks for two hundred years, our first national park was already more than sixty years old, and many scenic roads had already been built within other city, state, and national parks.

During the early years of the national parks, many tourists had arrived by railroad, and traveled by stagecoach within the parks. But after 1910 – increasing numbers of them arrived in new-fangled automobiles such as Henry Ford’s Model T.

The challenge to park planners and managers was three-pronged: how to accommodate so many people, how to move them (and their automobiles) around once they were there, and how in the process not to destroy or degrade what they had come to see.

During those early years, park tourism and road building were thus closely entwined, as they have remained. Grasping the trend, the Park Service’s first Director Stephen Mather decided that fostering automobile travel to the parks, and building roads within them, would both serve a public need and build public (and Congressional) support for the new park system.¹⁰

Initially, the Park Service joined with private, municipal, and civic groups to designate, mark, and improve roads connecting the parks, and many of those groups, along with Mather himself, envisioned park-to-park highways. Backed by the new National Parks Touring Association (1919) and the National Park-to-Park Highway Association, the National Park-to-Park Highway soon became a reality.¹¹

In a related move, Mather launched an aggressive national parks





publicity campaign: articles in popular magazines, a lushly illustrated *National Parks Portfolio*, millions of pamphlets, and countless other guides produced by local chambers of commerce and tourist bureaus.¹²

Mather's campaign worked. National parks visitation –much of it by auto – soared from 335,000 in 1915 to more than 1.5 million by the mid-1920s.¹³

Roads within the Western National Parks

It was also clear to Mather that roads *within* parks were in sad shape and not appropriate for automobiles. Thus road building within the parks was another top priority during his years as Director (1916-29).¹⁴

In 1927, Congress authorized a ten-year, \$51 million building plan for roads in the parks.¹⁵ Many of the Park Service's most notable scenic road projects were completed in these years, including the Generals Highway in Sequoia (1926), the grand Navajo Bridge¹⁶ across Marble Gorge of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park (1929), the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway in Zion Canyon (1930), the ten-mile Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park (1933), and the spectacular fifty-one mile Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park (1932).¹⁷

Good Roads, Scenic Roads, and the Eastern National Parks

Significantly, Mather's big push for roads in the western parks coincided with the move for national parks in the east and (as it turned out) roads between the newest and largest of them. But as with the parks themselves, the western model did not translate perfectly smoothly to the east.

The idea for scenic roads to serve the yearned for eastern national parks had been floated as early as 1919 in a speech by North Carolina attorney and resort developer Heriot Clarkson. "The National Government," Clarkson said, "has spent millions of dollars on roads in Yellowstone Park, White Mountains and elsewhere." Are our congressmen "sleeping at the switch?" he asked. "We have the most beautiful scenic mountains in the world. Our government has acquired hundreds of thousands of acres – why not great hard-surface roads built approaching and through them?"¹⁸

Clarkson's argument made perfect sense, but historically, roads in the southeast had been both a national and a regional problem. Prior to the 1930s, the United States had never moved very rapidly or dramati-



Auto sponsored by U.S. Office of Public Roads and American Highway Association stuck in mud in Johnston County, N.C., 1909. (Photo from North Carolina State Archives, via LEARN NC (<http://www.learnnc.org>))

cally to build public roads. A private 62-mile turnpike from Philadelphia to Lancaster PA became the nation's first in 1792. By 1789 we still had only 2,000 miles of roads usable for delivering mail, and federal funds for the National Road toward Cumberland MD were not appropriated until 1806. Ten thousand miles of wooden plank roads were built around 1850, but they were short-lived.¹⁹ In 1910, only slightly over seven percent of roads in the South qualified as "improved," and there was little state or federal money for road construction.²⁰

In the late 1920s, the Eastern National Park-to-Park Highway Association began to push for a highway to join together parks that were by then being planned: Shenandoah, Great Smoky Mountains, Mammoth Cave and several colonial Virginia sites. Despite the grand plans, planning and work moved slowly. As the Depression closed in, the coalition that had supported the Eastern National Park-to-Park Highway fragmented.²¹

The good news, however, was that the new parks came to the east after the local- and state-based "good roads movement" (1880-1916) had already made major strides in improving all-weather, all-purpose roads. The new roads and highways came in the nick of time: in 1900 fewer than 5,000 autos were registered nationwide, but by the late twenties, there were more than 25,000,000.²²



Slopes like this remained after the completion of private contract work carried out in the park by the Bureau of Public Roads. The CCC and the SNP landscape architects had to recreate the natural beauty and fix the unstable construction scars. (National Park Service Historic Photo Collection)



CCC workers plant mountain laurel in order to restore the landscape left scarred by the construction of the Skyline Drive. (Library of Congress). Below, CCC workers lay cable in the Shenandoah National Park. (National Park Service Historic Photo Collection)





By the time the Skyline Drive and Shenandoah National Park were proposed, states were into their second decade of serious, publicly-funded construction. Some federal funds had also become available after 1916, and by the mid-1920s highway construction was booming in response to demands from auto owners, farmers, business leaders, and tourist promoters.

In Virginia, unfortunately, good roads activism petered out by the early 1920s when a fiscally conservative “pay-as-you-go” movement under state senator (later governor and U.S. senator) Harry F. Byrd defeated an effort to get a large road-building bond issue approved by voters. Byrd’s fiscal conservatism dominated Virginia for the next several decades.

On the eve of the approval and construction of the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway, then, the balance sheet was mixed. General purpose public roads and highways in the southeast were both more numerous and in far better condition than they had been thirty years before, but park-to-park and intra-park roads were still relatively new (and still unrealized) ideas.

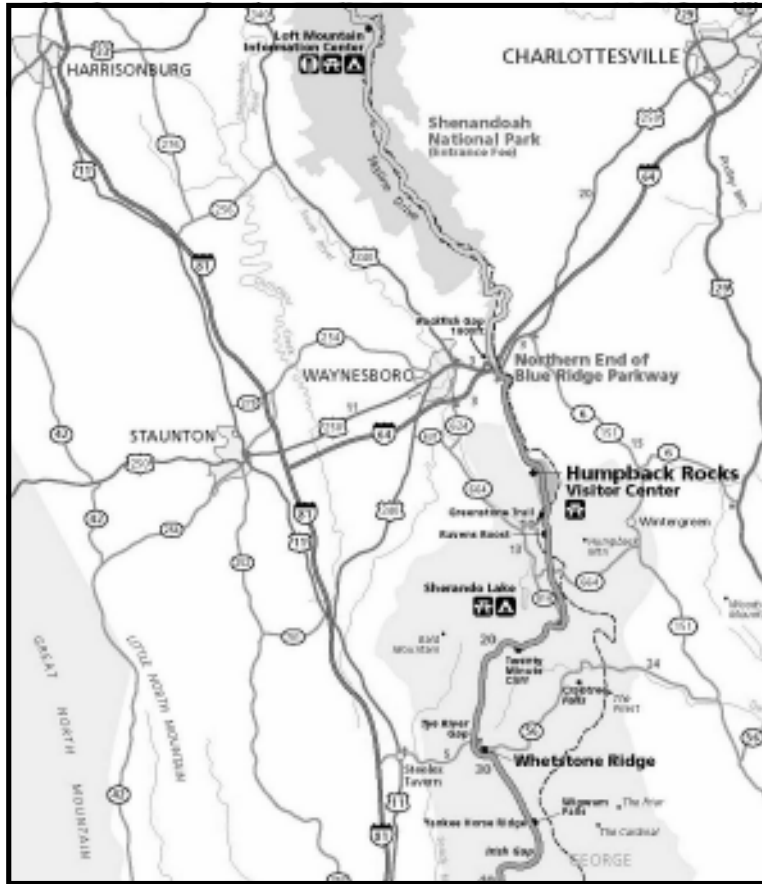
Such visions and plans were slow to come to fruition. Before they could mature, much public education, fund-raising, and legislative maneuvering lay ahead. But mature they soon did, in the form of the Colonial Parkway (Virginia, 1930-1957), Skyline Drive (Virginia, 1931-1937), the George Washington Memorial Parkway (Virginia and Maryland, 1932-1962), the Blue Ridge Parkway (North Carolina and Virginia, 1935-1987), and Natchez Trace Parkway (Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi, 1938-2005).

Two Scenic Roads in the East: Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway

Because Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway are often confused in travelers’ minds, it is useful to understand their relationship to their predecessors and to each other.

The eastern scenic roads grew out of nearly a century of American park development, more than three decades of parkway building in other parts of the country, and a decade of scenic road construction in the western national parks.

The first real motor parkway in the nation was the nineteen-mile Bronx River Parkway (begun in 1907). Although an urban road,



Map showing where the Skyline Drive ends and the Blue Ridge Parkway begins atop Afton Mountain and just above the city of Waynesboro.

it included many of the features that came to distinguish a parkway from a regular roadway. Protected by park lands on both sides, it did not allow access from adjoining properties. Intersecting roads passed over it on bridges, speeds were limited, and neither commercial vehicles nor billboards were allowed. It was carefully landscaped, and featured roadside recreational facilities. Throughout the 1920s, New York continued to lead the nation in parkway construction.²³

The federal push for parkways in the east emerged with the New Deal. One Saturday afternoon in April of 1935, while the Swift Run to Simmons Gap section of what we now know as Skyline Drive was under construction, National Park Service Assistant Director A. E. Demaray and the Bureau of Public Roads' Thomas MacDonald went on nationwide radio to talk about "Parkways of the Future."



With the Marine Band sounding the clatter of wagon wheels in the background, the narrator recounted the steady progress of America's transportation revolution: from covered wagons to railroads to autos to airplanes, and now to the "parkways of the future." People's instinct "to seek the open country or the gypsy trail is very strong," Demaray and MacDonald said. Parkways would help people escape the "unsightly billboards . . . hot-dog stands and gas stations" that had sprung up along the nation's roads, and fulfill their need for "natural scenic beauty."

It may be, the two officials said, "that eventually a great parkway will lead from New England . . . on south to connect with the Shenandoah-Great Smokies parkway, and on . . . into Georgia and perhaps to the Florida Everglades." Demaray linked this vision America's westward progress: "I can, in imagination," he said, "see still other parkways stretching westward."²⁴

But this ambitious vision of a network of parkways crisscrossing the nation never materialized. Paradoxically, it was washed away by the next wave of automobile-inspired progress, expressways and the interstate highway system.²⁵ During what proved to be a fairly brief interval, however, the nation gained several magnificent eastern scenic roads.

Unlike the early New York parkways, New Deal parkways emphasized recreation and scenery first and were only secondarily designed to get travelers to a destination. These parkways were less like urban parkways and more like the western park roads built in the 1920s, passing through undeveloped areas, serving a solely recreational purpose, and above all designed to be scenic.

Skyline Drive was well under way before the advent of the New Deal, but New Deal funds helped complete it. The Blue Ridge Parkway remained under construction for more than fifty years – far beyond the end of the New Deal itself.

Sometimes the two roads are mistakenly understood to be "the same road," but named differently in the two states through which they pass. But in fact they are – except for an 8.5 mile section of Skyline Drive north of Rockfish Gap that was built initially as part of the Parkway and later became part of Skyline Drive – two separate roads, begun at different times (1931 and 1935), planned and built by different entities, and completed fifty years apart (Skyline Drive in 1939 and the Parkway not until 1987).²⁶



Contrary to a widespread misconception, neither Skyline Drive nor the Parkway was constructed either by hand labor or by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Both were built by private contractors using standard road construction machinery and techniques of the period. During the nine years (1933-1942) the CCC existed, however, it did supply labor to finish grading cuts and fills, construct water supply and drainage systems, landscape overlooks and recreation areas, and build guard rails and trails (see “CCC Boys: The Civilian Conservation Corps”).

Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway are both ridgetop roads – the former a road through a park and the latter itself an elongated park. They connect end-to-end at Rockfish Gap and stretch for a combined total of 574 miles.

At 469 miles, the Parkway, which traverses both states, is by far the longer of the two. The 105 mile long Skyline Drive, all of which lies within Virginia, reaches its highest elevation (3680 feet) at Skyland; the Parkway rises to 6047 feet at Richland Balsam near its southern end.

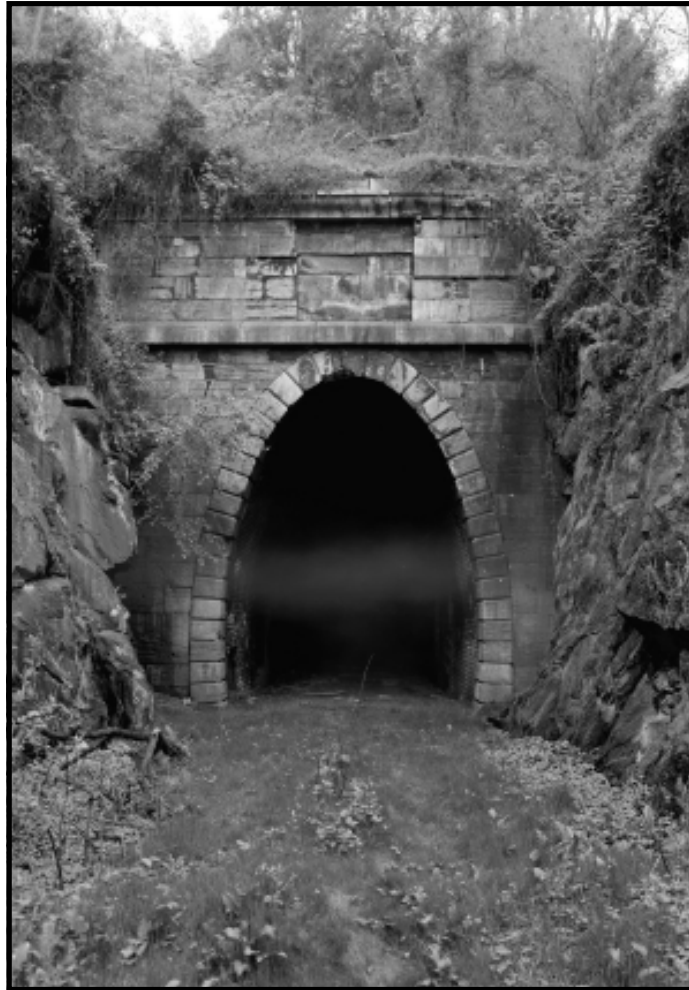
That the two parkways should join at Rockfish Gap is remarkably appropriate, since a 4263-foot tunnel was bored beneath the gap for the Blue Ridge Railroad in 1858. The railroad followed the ancient Mountain (or Mountain Ridge) road, renamed Three Notch’d (or Chopt) Road in the 1740s, which was the main east-west route from Richmond into the Great Valley. Currently, I-64 and highways 610 and 250 intersect nearby.

Commemoration, History, and the Future: Seventy-five Years and Counting

Sitting as it does at the hub of all of this history, Augusta County residents doubtless have been hearing a lot in the past year or so about the commemorations ongoing or planned of the seventy-five anniversaries of the Blue Ridge Parkway (2010) and Shenandoah National Park (2011). But what do the commemorations have to do with history, and what can they mean for the parks’ future?

For historians, anniversaries are exciting and challenging. Exciting because they are purportedly about remembering and reflecting on the past. But challenging because they take place in the present, planned and shaped by present concerns, stakeholders, and issues. Figuring out how to mobilize often complicated or contentious histories for celebratory purposes can present unforeseen difficulties.

In our capacity as historians, both of us have been involved in



The Blue Ridge Tunnel, built for the railroad in the 1850s, pierces the mountain where the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway meet. ((National Park Service Historic Photo Collection))

the Parkway and Shenandoah anniversaries. As the only person who had written a major work on the Parkway's history in more than thirty-five years (*Super-Scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History*, UNC Press 2006), Anne served on the board of Blue Ridge Parkway 75, Inc., the nonprofit organization formed to coordinate the Parkway's celebration. And as scholars with deep expertise in the history of the Appalachian region, we were together engaged as writers for the history and culture sections of the Shenandoah National Park historic handbook, which is to be issued in 2011 to coincide with Shenandoah's festivities.



Despite the fact that the Parkway 75 group was, in some ways, a conglomeration of representatives of groups with divergent interests from tourism promotion and economic development to conservation, everyone shared the goal of protecting and preserving the Parkway for the next seventy-five years and beyond. We hoped to nurture future park stewards, and, specifically, to secure more federal funds for Parkway land acquisition and operations.

Yet, as the year turned out, we succeeded more in promotion, celebration, remembrance, product sales, increased visitation, and publicity than we did in making policy changes, securing more funding for the Parkway, or engaging the community-based planners and regional political leaders whose decisions directly shape the Parkway for the future. The Parkway land acquisition bill proposed last spring languished in Congress, and the anniversary year ended with the election of many politicians whose fundamental philosophies are so at odds with park building and federally sponsored conservation that it is hard to imagine they will be Parkway champions.

This outcome may have something to do with history and something to do with the commemorative moment itself. The history of the Parkway is full of conflict among powerful and powerless stakeholders. It is intertwined with changing public notions about the proper role of government. And it has been shaped by the not-always-neatly-aligned interests of business supporters, tourists, conservationists, landowners, and other citizens. But the commemorative moment elides both historical conflicts and persistent political differences, and values harmony, consensus, shared goals, and a sense of forward progress, even among the representatives of diverse interest groups.

It is difficult for the historian to participate meaningfully in this process. Anne did answer numerous factual questions about the Parkway's past and spoke in two public forums organized by the Seventy-fifth group. She was also interviewed by many a media outlet, most of whom did a commendable job in using her historian's insights to outline the Parkway's many ongoing challenges.

But few people read longer books like hers, and complicated tales of how the powerful got what they wanted don't make good sound bites for public ceremonies or tag lines for T-shirts. "Commemorations" are supposed to make people feel good, and "civic engagement" in its more difficult, time-intensive, and ongoing dimensions was not, on the whole, a major feature of the year.



As a result, Anne – and the Parkway’s real history – were both sometimes excluded from the celebration’s more “inspirational” moments. At the final ceremony on what was purportedly “the” date of the anniversary (a date that itself is in dispute), the place of “historian” on the dais with Congresspersons and the governors of Virginia and North Carolina was taken by the elderly Harley Jolley, author of a celebratory 1969 Parkway history that focused on shared vision and touted the park as a simple “godsend for the needy.” The capstone ceremony repeated exactly the kind of bland and uncritical rhetoric, consensus history, and system-serving processes that fail to address the real causes of some of the Parkway’s problems.

Meanwhile, we experienced some similar problems in writing the history and culture sections of the Shenandoah visitor handbook. Shenandoah, like the Parkway, was born in conflict, and not everyone in Virginia was delighted to see the national parks march east. Segregation based in the country’s deep racism marred the park’s early years. And Shenandoah – like all of our national parks – faces underfunding, understaffing, crumbling 1930s infrastructure, and the problem of mobilizing a new generation of stewards.

Yet in Shenandoah, as on the Parkway, the commemorative moment has not yet proved a promising time for complicated and broadly contextualized history that ties the park to America’s larger stories – and that might help the public conceive how the national context is affecting the park now. We were sorry to see considerable portions of our Shenandoah manuscript – including some of the material that appears in this article – excised from the handbook by park staff, who were more comfortable with a simple, local story that highlighted the public’s positive experiences with the park and left larger issues to be taken up elsewhere.

At one stage, someone involved with Parkway anniversary planning suggested that instead of discussing the Parkway’s difficult past when talking with public audiences, Anne should seek to inspire stewardship with a message of “hope and joy.” But history, as we know, is not full of hope and joy, and such a message – pervasive through the Parkway’s seventy-fifth anniversary, and likely dominant in Shenandoah’s as well – will, we think, leave the public and the parks’ supporters ill-equipped to make the difficult, controversial, and essentially political decisions they will have to make to protect these parks in



the future from those who would elevate private interests over the public good. Thus, when the celebrations are over, the real work of understanding the past and mobilizing for the future begins.

Endnotes

¹Gibson and Jung, Historical Census Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau, <<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056.html>>; Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 52.

²Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 48-52.

³Quoted in Engle, *The Greatest Single Feature*, 16.

⁴This group did not specify a particular location for the park they wanted, so their efforts cannot be directly linked to agitation for a park in the Great Smoky Mountains. But they did list as possible areas the Great Smokies and parts of the Balsams, and sent the Senate a map showing the general area desired for the park. See Campbell, *Birth of a National Park*, 15, and Smith, "The Appalachian National Park Movement," 47, 53-54.

⁵*Report from the Secretary of Agriculture in Relation to the Forests, Rivers, and Mountains of the Southern Appalachian Region*, Senate Document 84 (1901) (http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/8/southern_app/contents.htm)

⁶Frome, *Strangers in High Places*, 174-78; Smith, "The Appalachian National Park Movement," 44-47, 52-65. Brown, "Smoky Mountains Story," 122-23 and 133-34; Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers*, 114-16.

⁷Barringer, *Selling Yellowstone: Capitalism and the Construction of Nature*, 18-32. See Reed Engle's excellent discussion, "Roads and Parks Before the Skyline Drive," *The Greatest Single Feature: A Skyline Drive* (2006), 1-4

⁸Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness* (1999).

⁹Dunn, *Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937* (1988).

¹⁰Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 1-10, 139-87, 146; Shaffer, *See America First*, 94.

¹¹McClelland, *Presenting Nature*, 78, 104; Sutter, *Driven Wild*, 102-10; Shaffer, *See America First*, 102-06, 117-19; Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 147, 151; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 59-60.

¹²Sutter, *Driven Wild*, 102 -10; Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 5-9; 77, 146-52. McClelland, *Presenting Nature*, 78, 104; Shaffer, *See America First*, 102-06, 117-19; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 41-43; *National Parks Portfolio* (1921).

¹³Louter, *Windshield Wilderness: Cars, Roads, and Nature in Washington's National Parks* (2006) and Whisnant, *Super-Scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History* (2006).

¹⁴39 Stat. 535, "An Act to Establish a National Park Service, and for Other Purposes" (1916), reprinted in Dilsaver, *America's National Park System*, 46; and Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 5-7.

¹⁵Sutter, *Driven Wild*, 110; "Lying Lightly on the Land, NPS, <<http://www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer/III>>; Sellars, *Preserving Nature*, 47-53, 61; McClelland, *Presenting Nature*, 108-09; Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 7, 171-77.

¹⁶"Lying Lightly on the Land," NPS, <<http://www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer/III>>; Carr, *Wilderness by Design*, 180-87; Simmons, *Cooperation, Controversy and Conflict*, 159; Davis, Croteau and Marston, *America's National Park Roads and Parkways*.

¹⁷Heriot Clarkson speech, September 1919, Heriot Clarkson Papers, Box 2, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library. Cited in Whisnant, *Super-Scenic Motorway*.

¹⁸Engle, *Greatest Single Feature*, 1-3.

¹⁹Preston, *Dirt Roads to Dixie* 13, 37.

²⁰Whisnant, *Super-Scenic Motorway*, 29-30.

²¹Shaffer, *See America First*, 137-161. Preston, *Dirt Roads to Dixie*, 13-16, 19-25, 37-66; Brown, *The State Highway System*, 35-36; Shaffer, *See America First*, 138-40, 154-61.

²²Clarke, "The Parkway Idea," 40-42; Cutler, *The Public Landscape of the New Deal*, 52.

²³MacDonald and Demaray, "Parkways of the Future: Radio Address," 13 April 1935, BRPA.

²⁴Jakle, *The Tourist*, 129; and Patton, *Open Road*, 71-75.

²⁵Engle, *Greatest Single Feature*, 50-53, 96.



Book Reviews

[Editor's Note: The following section consists of reviews of recent books on regional and Virginia history as well as several that pertain to the history of the South. Unless otherwise noted, these reviews are by AHB Book Review Editor and Associate Editor Daniel A. Métraux, Professor of Asian Studies at Mary Baldwin College. Please send any reviews or questions about reviews to the AHB's Book Review Editor, Daniel Métraux at dmetraux@mbc.edu or Dept. of Asian Studies, Mary Baldwin College, Staunton, VA 24401. The deadline for all reviews is October 1, 2011.]

Local and Regional History

Jonathan A. Noyalas, Ed., *Home Front to Front Line: The Civil War Era in the Shenandoah Valley*. New Market VA: Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, 2009. 76 pp.

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation has produced three excellent books on the Civil War in this region. *"If this Valley is lost, Virginia is lost!" Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (2006) and *"Give the enemy no rest!" Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Campaign* do an excellent job tracing the military campaigns in the Valley, but their focus is primarily on military history. By far the most interesting volume is the most recent volume on the effects of the war on the civilian population of the Valley.

This short book contains six superb essays by local and regional historians. Ken E. Koons directs his attention to the production of wheat and other food products while Jonathan A. Noyalas discusses the difficult role of African Americans in this region during the war. Emmert F. Bittinger looks at the problems facing Union sympathizers in the Valley while Stephen Longeneckerr addresses the question of religion during the fighting. Jonathan M. Berkey analyzes the important role of Confederate women in the war effort while Nancy T. Sorrells gives a very effective survey of the effect of the war on the region's families. All of these essays are very clearly written and well edited.

Professor Koons provides an excellent analysis of the agricultural importance of the Valley in the mid-nineteenth century. Working only nine percent of the available farmland in Virginia in 1850, Valley farmers grew twenty-two percent of the state's wheat. Farmers in Augusta and neighboring counties produced an astounding



twenty bushels of wheat per capita (farmers in neighboring areas produced an average of six bushels). "Given these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the Confederate high command would have counted so heavily on the farm production of the Shenandoah Valley to fill its commissary wagons. Of course, these same circumstances led to the emergence of the Valley as a particular target of federal armies seeking to destroy sources of foodstuffs for Southern armies....[V]alley populations suffered greatly in these actions, which was exactly the point as Federal armies resorted to total war and the purposeful destruction of civilian property in order to reduce the capacity of the South to continue to wage war."

The war temporarily disrupted the production of wheat and other foods, but by 1870 and 1880 agricultural yield had fully recovered. It was only in the early 1900s that the region shifted away from grains and more to livestock (chicken, turkey, cattle, and sheep). To this day Augusta County remains a key agricultural county in Virginia (Rockingham is first and Augusta County is second in the state in agricultural production)..

Nancy Sorrells has dug into many letters written back and forth between soldiers and their families to show the strain of a region facing total war. She notes how families in both rural areas and bigger towns found their lives turned upside down by the war. Focusing on the family of the Rev. Francis McFarland, his wife Mary and their three young adult sons from southern Augusta County, she writes:

As battle lines were drawn across the country, life on the home front underwent tremendous change. Almost immediately, most able-bodied men, like the three McFarland sons, went off to war leaving farms, grain mills, and iron furnaces without adequate labor. Later in the war, the slave labor disappeared as well – with African Americans either slipping away to Union lines or being drafted and sent to build fortifications around Richmond. The task of holding the farms together thus fell to women or to elderly men like McFarland who wondered in his diary how he could manage the farm without his two sons but decided to "submit to the will of Providence" for the answer.

One cause of stress was not knowing whether one's son/ husband was still alive. The McFarland's lost two of their three sons — in one case they received conflicting reports—their son was wounded, he was dead, no, he was alive, and finally, he



was dead and buried. Life on the home front was pure hell for all those involved.

Home Front to Front Line is a superb introductory study of the Civil War in the Valley. It is beautifully and clearly written, superbly edited, and covers a vast array of topics in a very few pages. This volume will appeal to both the general reader and the scholar and should be included in all high school and college courses on the Civil War.

Elizabeth Spilman Massie and Cortney Skinner, *Images of America: Waynesboro*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009. 128 pp.

I have lived next door to Waynesboro for nearly three decades, but knew virtually nothing about its history until I bought this beautifully crafted little book. I now know that Waynesboro has a very rich history very different from neighboring Staunton. Founded in the mid-1700s, it acquired its name from a Pennsylvania-based Revolutionary War general, “Mad” Anthony Wayne. The glorious general never visited this part of Virginia, but settlers from Pennsylvania honored him by naming their town after him.

The town remained small until the lines of the Norfolk and Western and Chesapeake and Ohio Railroads crossed, making it an important railroad hub. A number of factories grew there and in the neighboring town of Basic City across the South River. Basic City lost its identity in 1924 when it was merged with Waynesboro. Many of the industries closed down in the late 1900s, but the town has continued to thrive as a major retail center.

This book is divided up into ten chapters which take on such topics as religion and education, business, transportation as well as a look at early days and the historical development of the two towns of Waynesboro and Basic. One of the early chapters, “The Mountain-Valley Connection,” does an excellent job through photographs linking the town with Shenandoah National Park after it was established in 1926. The opening photograph details a large wooden arch with the writing “Waynesboro – Gateway to the Shenandoah National Park” over its crown.

This book has little text and the focus is almost entirely on photographs. This is unfortunate because there is much history here and the photographs would make more sense if each section had a couple of pages of background. Nevertheless, the authors have gone to great



lengths to chronicle the history of their city through vintage drawings, paintings and photographs—many of which came from the Waynesboro Historical Society. It is through the many pictures from the past that the reader can begin to appreciate the former and current vitality of this city.

This volume is one of the few publications that focus on Waynesboro. It is a chronological photographic history of the town – and it is valuable because of its rich repository of pictures.

Donald A. Davis, *Stonewall Jackson: A Biography*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007 and 2009. 204 pp.

Few Civil War generals have sustained such great respect as Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson. His brilliant 1862 “Valley Campaign” continues to be studied by military theorists, students, and historians to this day. Jackson gained international fame and the respect of friend and foe alike by revolutionizing the military tactics of his generation and by becoming the father of modern mobile warfare. Jackson was also a man of mass contradictions—a devout Christian who spent more time talking to god than to his own men but who had no qualms over killing as many of the enemy as he could.

Jackson was born at Clarksburg in what is now West Virginia on January 21, 1824, into an attorney’s family. Orphaned as a boy, he had a very unsettled childhood and adolescence before he had the good fortune of securing an appointment to West Point. He was poorly educated, but through sheer determination and hard work he was able to pass his first year courses and eventually graduate seventeenth out of a class of fifty-nine. As luck would have it, weeks after his 1846 graduation he found himself in the thick of the Mexican War as an artillery officer.

Jackson’s often reckless behavior, his sheer determination to finish each and every task at hand, his bad temper and utter inability to work in harmony with others showed a man who possessed some degree of mental instability. Nevertheless, his raw courage and fighting ability saw him rise to the rank of major by the end of the war. He was subsequently stationed at Fort Mead in Florida where a bitter dispute with a brother officer over a trivial issue brought a sharp reprimand from the War Department in Washington and Jackson’s resignation from the army. Jackson fortunately found a teaching post



at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington Virginia where he remained for the next eight years.

He married twice, bought a comfortable house and seemed to enjoy teaching although the general consensus was that he was a mediocre teacher at best.

Jackson also spent of his time studying military science and was thus ready to take command of Confederate troops at the start of the Civil War. His brilliance at the Battle of Bull Run in the summer of 1861 saved the day for the South and earned him the nickname "Stonewall." Jackson's ability to move his comparatively small army up and down the Valley of Virginia from Staunton to Winchester allowed him to win brilliant victories over numerically superior Federal troops. Later Jackson proved indispensable helping Lee win some major victories in central Virginia before he was mortally wounded at Chancellorsville in May, 1863.

Military historian Donald A. Davis praises Jackson for his military brilliance, but is somewhat critical of his character. Davis describes Jackson as a man who had no fear and as a result took needless risks that not only endangered him, but his men as well. General Wesley K. Clark in the forward has this rather biting criticism of Stonewall Jackson:

And while his penchant for extreme personal hardship – pushing himself to exhaustion, sleeping outdoors in the roughest weather, at times even refusing proper clothing and protection – set an admirable example and perhaps was the reason in part for the incredible bond he enjoyed with his troops, it also cost thousands of lives. He was simply "out" on his feet for much of the Seven Days Battle where he was actually responsible for the bulk of Lee's Army and the main effort to crush McClellan on the peninsula. Asleep, mumbling incoherently, lost, unresponsive to colleagues, his intellect and battlefield judgment failed, and the South suffered thousands of casualties while Jackson floundered. While Lee took much of the blame, and Jackson's reputation shielded him somewhat, a fresh, alert, engaged Jackson might have delivered a devastating defeat of McClellan, instead of simply pushing McClellan back toward his base.

Worse yet, it is Jackson who did this to himself. Sloppy foresight and personal planning cost him several nights of rest. Commanders owe it to their troops to maintain their mental qualities throughout a long campaign, and must take of themselves accordingly. It may be necessary, and even okay to push troops so hard they're literally asleep on their feet – but for a commander to do it to himself through carelessness is just inexcusable....Finally, Jackson's brittle tempera-



ment – he was quick to fault others and unforgiving in response – and tendency to pick fawning friends rather than proven performers for promotion were character traits which would have been totally debilitating in higher command. Too often Lee saved him from himself.

Davis' biography of Jackson is a brilliant very detailed descriptive analysis of Jackson's military campaigns that will delight the Civil War buff and military historian, but ultimately bore the average reader. The sections describing the positive and negative aspects of Jackson's abilities and character and his relationship with Lee are fresh and original. The sections devoted to Jackson's campaigns in and around Staunton, Augusta County and neighboring areas will certainly interest readers of this journal. Surprisingly, Davis fails to include any maps of Jackson's campaigns which would be very helpful to readers unfamiliar with the geography of central and western Virginia.

Robert L. Driver, Jr. *More Than a Few Good Men*. Buena Vista, Va.: Mariner Publishing, 2009. 540 pp.

Lt. Colonel Robert J. Driver, Jr., USMC [Ret] is a distinguished local Civil War historian well known to our community as the author/editor of a number of very well composed and highly useful books including *Lexington and Rockbridge County in the Civil War* and *Confederate Soldiers, Marines and Signalmen from Virginia and Maryland*. These books go far in preserving the records and history of the Civil War in this region and in Virginia.

Robert Driver, however, has another very big and very personal story to tell—his own very distinguished career in the U.S. Marines and his very deep involvement as a combat officer in Vietnam in the mid-1960s. Driver's book is a full accounting of his early life in Virginia and North Carolina, his training as a young Marine throughout the 1950s and early 1960s and his deployment to Vietnam in 1965. Driver's work centers on his own time in Vietnam, but he also devotes a great many pages to the experiences, triumphs and occasional tragedies experienced by other Marines and military personnel in Vietnam.

Driver's work is not a scholarly venture. We hear nothing of the causes and consequences of the Vietnam War. Rather, the book reads like an extensive blog taken from his memories and his many letters to his wife and other folks back home. One entry reads:



17 August [1965], Below Marble Mountain:

"My first night out here in the desert turned out to be one of combat....It was a strange feeling of helplessness when you are fired at. I wasn't particularly afraid; actually wasn't afraid at all. What's frustrating is not being able to see who's firing at you. They're sneaky little devils. I fired at one VC with my grease gun but missed him....You feel sorry for the women and children, as they are more than dirt poor. There are no men of military age seen; only children, women, and old men. The husbands are all VC or VC controlled. The people seem to have nothing more than the shirts on their backs, a pig, a cow, some chickens or ducks, and a rice paddy."

5 January 1966

"Heard that Bob Sweeney drowned down at Chu Lai. He was walking along the beach with his relief showing him around and walked out on some rocks. A big wave knocked him off and he drowned. He had extended over here and had just made Major. We had another quiet night last night."

23 January 1966

"Today NBC's Dean Brelis and a photographer went out with a patrol about 15 minutes ago. Hope they don't run into anything large. We can't stand many more casualties as we had 2 men to almost crack up yesterday and both had to be sent back to Battalion. We're losing more by illness and injuries than by the VC...."

Driver presents us with a very graphic and detailed description of the day-to-day life of Americans in combat in Vietnam. His work makes a very unique and valuable record of the war and there is much to be learned here. This is not the kind of book one reads on a lazy snowy Sunday afternoon for pleasure. But if read slowly in small bites, one gets a very clear picture of the war—as well as conditions in the 1990s when the author returns to Vietnam for a visit. The book is well written and edited with a great many interesting comments and observations by the author. It is a goldmine for any student wanting to write a term researcher paper on the Vietnam War. The book is also very well illustrated with photographs from Vietnam and elsewhere.

Eric Jay Dolin, *Fur, Fortune, and Empire: The Epic History of the Fur Trade in America*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2010. 442 pp.

Most of the early explorers of North America came here for profit. They were willing to invest considerable sums of money with the hope of reaping even higher rates of return. Some ventures were very successful while others ended in disaster. Early colonial ventures made a fortune from the prolific fishing waters of New En-



gland and Atlantic Canada, so much so that historian Mark Kurlansky was able to write a convincing book, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish that Changed the World* (1998). Fishing for cod was a key reason for the early economic penetration of North America and led to wholesale changes in the diet of millions of Europeans. Eric Jay Dolin has complemented Kurlansky's work with his study of the fur trade in North America. Dolin advances a very convincing argument that the search for fur was a key, if not the key, economic incentive for the early exploration of North America from Quebec and New England to western Virginia to California and the far reaches of Alaska. He writes: "The fur trade was a powerful force in shaping the course of American history from the early 1600s through the late 1800s, playing a major role in the settlement and evolution of the colonies, and in the growth of the United States. Millions of animals were killed for their pelts, which were used according to the dictates of fashion — and human vanity. This relentless pursuit of furs left in its wake a dramatic, often tragic tale of clashing cultures, fluctuating fortunes, and bloody wars."

Indeed beavers, sea otters, seals, and buffalo were slaughtered, used for their invaluable pelts that were tailored into extravagant hats, coats, wraps, and even sleigh blankets. The demand for American fur extended from Europe all the way to China. The fur trade determined the course of empire. It spurred the colonization of eastern North America and led to a dramatic showdown between the French and British who collided in what was then the frontier region of western Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania. It influenced the trappers and traders who ventured out into the plains in search of Buffalo and spurred wars with Native Americans that led to their dismal demise. Fur along with mining led to the exploration and settlement of the Rockies and West Coast including a short-lived Russian colony at Fort Ross on the coast of northern California.

Dolin begins his work with early settlements by the French and Dutch that were based on the search for beaver and the skins of other animals. The British conquered both but soon gave way to the Americans who took their quest to the West. Dolin very carefully explains how Americans, Russians, and other Europeans virtually exterminated the buffalo, sea otter, seal and beaver in their aggressive search for profit. Dolin tells us what happened, but he is even better in describing the fascinating caste of characters such as Thomas Mortin,



a rather impertinent fellow who infuriated the good Pilgrims of Massachusetts when he traded guns to local Indians, and such frontier characters as Kit Carson and Jedidiah Smith.

Dolin's *Fur, Fortune, and Empire* is a very clearly written and readable study that is both comprehensive and intensively researched. The sections that provided the newest material for this reader were those that focused on the Dutch settlement of the Hudson River, the brief Swedish settlement further south, and the wild escapades of John Jacob Astor, the first multimillionaire in the United States who made a huge fortune in the fur trade in the West. There is also a solid section that deals with Virginia's efforts led by Governor Dinwiddie to solidify its claims in the Ohio region in spite of French penetration of the region. One result of these conflicting claims was the French and Indian War, which affected frontier settlements in the Shenandoah Valley like Staunton, and took place in a region that was once Augusta County.

Controversial Figures of the Early Republic

Ira Stoll, *Samuel Adams A Life*. New York: Free Press, 2008. 338 pp.

John Adams once wrote; "Without the character of Samuel Adams, the true history of the American Revolution can never be written." Thomas Jefferson said, "Samuel Adams 'truly the Man of the Revolution....for depth of purpose, zeal and sagacity, no man in Congress exceeded, if any equaled Sam. Adams.'" Nineteenth century historian James K. Hosmer wrote: "As far as the genesis of America is concerned, Samuel Adams can more properly be called the 'Father of America' than Washington." Yet when I asked one of my history classes at Mary Baldwin College recently to identify John Adams and Samuel Adams, they had no problem with John, but predictably equated Samuel with that rather foul brew from Boston.

Ira Stoll, a former editor of the now defunct *New York Sun*, argues that Samuel Adams (1722-1803) belongs in the top tier of the "Founding Fathers" of America. Stoll has written this engaging book to press his case: Adams was an active political leader, journalist and polemicist in Massachusetts who in the 1760s and early 1770s who worked fervently against British attempts to tax the citizenry of its American colonies. His actions gained the attention of his fellow Bostonians who elected him to



their provincial legislature along with John Hancock year after year. His articles in Boston's newspapers were very influential in creating a sense that Americans must defend their liberty by overthrowing the British regime. Adams was certainly the first major political leader and writer of note to call for independence from Britain and many of his ideas and expressions eventually found their way into the American Declaration of Independence.

Stoll writes that "With eloquence equal to that of Thomas Jefferson and Tom Paine, and with a passionate love of god, Adams helped ignite the flame of liberty and made sure it glowed even during the Revolution's darkest hours." We learn from Stoll that Adams was deeply religious: "He believed that God had intervened on behalf of the United States and would do so as long as its citizens maintained civic virtue. 'We shall never be abandoned by Heaven while we act worthy of its aid and protection.'" Adams believed that an independent United States would be the fulfillment of God's desire for a free nation based on the idea of liberty for all.

Adams, however, was far more than a polemicist, journalist or local politician. He represented Massachusetts in Congress throughout the Revolution and proved himself to be a most adept politician who played a leading role in the prosecution of the war. Later he played a leading role in the drafting and implementation of the first constitution for Massachusetts which in turn served as a model for the American Constitution. Adams later served as Lieutenant Governor and Governor of Massachusetts.

Stoll's biography of Adams is very readable. He makes full use of a vast array of primary documents to buttress his arguments and is very convincing in his assertion of Adam's important role as a "Founding Father." But at the same time one quickly tires of the author's endless assertions of the role religion played in Adam's public and private life. And we learn very little about Adam's personal life—what kind of person was he? What made him tick? We get a full view of Adams' writings, but no clear picture of Adams the man. The reader will appreciate the force of Adams' writings and speeches against the British, but will walk away with only an abstraction of who this man really was.



Bruce Chadwick, *I am Murdered: George Wythe, Thomas Jefferson, and the Killing that Shocked a New Nation*. New York: Wiley, 2009.

George Wythe (1726-1806) was a leading figure in Virginia during the late colonial and early national periods. One of the leading lawyers in the country, Wythe was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, a mentor to younger colleagues like Thomas Jefferson, and as the nation's first major professor of law, is known as the "Father of American Jurisprudence."

Wythe was enjoying his old age when one day in May, 1806, after breakfast, he felt a terrible pain in his stomach. He clung to the mahogany banister of his comfortable Richmond home as he made his way down the stairs and into the kitchen. There he found his maid, Lydia Broadnax, and his young protégé, Michael Brown, who were also writhing in distress. Hours later, when help arrived, Wythe was quick to tell anyone who would listen, "I am murdered." Over the next two weeks, as Wythe suffered a long and painful death, insults would be added to his mortal injury.

I Am Murdered tells the bizarre but very true story of Wythe's death and the subsequent trial of his grandnephew and namesake, George Wythe Sweeney, for the crime—unquestionably the most sensational and talked-about court case of the era. Hinging on hit-and-miss forensics, the unreliability of medical autopsies, the prevalence of poisoning, race relations, slavery, and the law, Sweeney was eventually acquitted of the charge of murder, though the author is convinced that he was in fact guilty.

Author Bruce Chadwick does an excellent job in describing the life of the now largely forgotten Wythe, his murder and the Sweeney trial. We also learn a lot about life in Richmond and the highlights of Virginia society at the start of the nineteenth century as well as a careful analysis of Virginia's none-to-perfect legal system of the time. In that sense Chadwick's book is a very good read. One even finds some interesting mentions of Staunton.

But there are problems. Much of the book suffers from a rather severe lack of organization. The author's narrative jumps back and forth in time so often that the reader can get a bit confused as to what is going on. Chadwick also loves to digress into long-winded discussions such things as life in Virginia cities after the revolution, the prevalence of gambling, and so on. These digressions are inter-



esting in themselves, but they get in the way of the main story.

Nevertheless, I highly recommend this narrative about one of Virginia's early leaders and his horribly painful death.

Andro Linklater, *An Artist in Treason: The Extraordinary Double Life of General James Wilkinson*. New York: Walker Publishing Co., 2008.

President Thomas Jefferson summoned an urgent cabinet meeting in the White House. The fate of his government and his country rested in the hands of one general and nobody knew where he and the bulk of the United States army was and whether he would remain loyal to the country he had sworn to defend. Former Vice-President Aaron Burr had launched a highly credible conspiracy of revolutionizing the western portion of the United States, separating it from the Union, establishing a monarchy with New Orleans as its capital, and then moving south to seize parts of Spanish Mexico. There was intense speculation that General James Wilkinson (1757-1826), chief commander of the U.S. Army, had conspired with Burr and that he would use his troops to affect the breakup of the United States. If Wilkinson was indeed a traitor, there was nothing that Jefferson could do to stop him. There was even talk that Wilkinson would use his forces to precipitate a war with Spain to acquire further Spanish territory for the United States.

As it turned out, Wilkinson, who had corresponded with Burr and was certainly at one point one of the plotters, declared his loyalty to the United States, fortified New Orleans against a possible attack by Burr's forces, and thus saved the Union. While one might call Wilkinson's efforts heroic, the general was not a reliable and trustworthy leader. He was also a traitor who was also known as Agent 13 in the Spanish secret service who was paid large sums of money by Spanish colonial authorities in New Orleans, Florida and elsewhere to warn them of plans by Americans to expand their borders at the expense of the sagging Spanish empire.

Wilkinson was a brilliant general who won his appointment because of his ability to organize and manage the U.S. military at the birth of the Republic. At age 20 he became the youngest general in the revolutionary Continental Army and by age thirty-eight, he was senior general in the army. But Wilkinson was a vain and deceitful man who spent lavishly and cared only for his own welfare and sta-



tus. Seeking greater fortune when he moved to Kentucky after the Revolution, he contacted Spanish authorities then based in New Orleans and convinced them to hire him at great cost as their secret agent. Knowing his high rank in the U.S. military, the Spanish jumped at the chance. Over the years he betrayed numerous strategic secrets of the U.S., did everything he could to halt American expansion, and later in his career almost delivered Lewis and Clark's expedition into Spanish hands (the Spanish feared that Lewis and Clark reports would lead to American settlements in the West which in turn would threaten their New Mexican empire).

Amazingly, many high-ranking officials including presidents Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison had heard of Wilkinson's alleged treacherous dealings with the Spanish, but they needed his organizational skills and gambled that Wilkinson would ultimately not betray his country and overthrow the new republic. Ultimately their strategy worked because even though Wilkinson did help the Spanish, he in turned betrayed them when he felt he could gain more by remaining loyal to the United States.

Author and historian Andro Linklater writes:

What makes the story of James Wilkinson's double life truly compelling is the light that it casts upon the early years of the United States. The federal union was newly knit, and its government untested. Its very identity was more tenuous than seems imaginable today. There was no certainty that "the new experiment in democracy" would take hold, no inevitability about the survival of liberty, no guarantee about the growth of power and territory. Failure threatened every political choice. In the republic's barely formed state, the loyalty of the army posed a particular danger...

Many of America's leaders feared that a standing army could pose a real threat to the security of their government, but they also realized that an established military was necessary to defend the state. They knew Wilkinson, more than any other military figure in the country, had the unique ability to both tame and train American forces into a strong fighting force. Thus, despite their misgivings about Wilkinson's ultimate loyalties, they were willing to gamble that he would not betray his country, despite the fact that he was, in the words of historian Frederick Jackson Turner, "the most consummate artist in treason the nation has ever possessed."

Linklater's work is a fascinating history not only of Wilkinson, but also of the early years of the American republic. It is very well written and minutely researched.



Wilkinson makes full use of Spanish archives, which very clearly identify the treacherous activities of this incredible man. The survival of the nation rested in his hands and it is lucky that at critical junctures Wilkinson found it more advantageous to remain loyal.

Presidential Politics and Questions of National Unity from the early 1800s to the Civil War

The following reviews pertain to recent books on antebellum American history. While each one focuses on a specific time, individual or individuals, or single administration, when read together they give a clear panorama of this nation's history as it moved from its own infancy to a grievous national divide. And while these books deal with national rather than regional or local topics, what happened had a very strong impact on our region.

Lynn Hudson Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams and the Election of 1828*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 252 pp.

Lynn Hudson Parsons' *The Birth of Modern Politics* is a short, well-written and very well researched study of the climactic 1828 presidential election between incumbent John Quincy Adams and his erstwhile challenger, the greatest military hero of the period, Andrew Jackson. The two had run against each other and William Crawford and Henry Clay in 1824. At that time Jackson had won far more electoral and popular votes than Adams, but was short of a majority. When the election went to the House of Representatives, Clay, the Speaker, joined forces with Adams and got enough votes there to carry the day. Jackson and his supporters cried "foul" and spent the next four years working to destroy Adams' agenda in Congress and preparing for a stronger run against Adams in 1828.

Parson's book focuses on two men—Jackson and Adams—and the 1828 campaign which, though the outcome was never really in doubt, did in fact generate important shifts in the practice of politics and the direction of the nation. Although the vote was limited to enfranchised white males, the number of voters casting ballots in the election was very much higher than before and the number of states choosing electoral votes through their state legislatures dwindled to two. It was the first truly popular election in the history of this nation.



Parsons, Professor of History at the State University of New York, in his introductory chapters provides a superb political history of the American Republic from the late 1700s through the 1820s. Parsons is especially good when he offers insights into the major issues in American political history from the Revolutionary period through the 1828 election. We get an in-depth view of the 1824 election, the negative reaction Adams received from a hostile Congress when he announced his surprising progressive national agenda (using an activist federal government to sponsor massive internal improvements, a national university and naval academy, and a new Department of the Interior), and the careful pro-Jackson movement led by Martin Van Buren, John C. Calhoun and others.

The reader gets to know Jackson and Adams very well. "Jackson was American mythology, a hardscrabble Scots-Irish child of the southwestern frontier, a slaveholding planter with a feel for the common man, a gaunt, fiery, honor-obsessed warrior. Adams was American royalty, a Harvard-educated, Europe-trained child of the northeastern elite, an antislavery intellectual with no feel whatsoever for the common man, a plump, dour, honor-obsessed diplomat....As Adams pushed a bold agenda of expansionary government, it became clear that the frontiersman and the cosmopolitan had little in common on the other big issues of the day. Jackson was the populist leader of the agrarian class, leery of federal power and egghead politicians, opposed to national banks and national debt and paper money; Adams was the elitist leader of the merchant class, leery of mob rule and "state's rights," a believer in national improvement. And as a candidate for reelection, he was doomed."

One rather sad note comes when Parsons tells us that the 1828 campaign represents the start of the long and very unpleasant tradition of anti-intellectualism in American politics –something which this country is unfortunately experiencing in the early part of this new century. Adams' supporters criticized Jackson for his lack of a formal education, his inability, said one, to even compose a four-word sentence correctly. Jackson's supporters called Adams an out-of-touch intellectual snob who had no sense of the hardships faced by the common laborer or farmer. These charges were demonstrably false as Jackson had quite a flair for the written word and Adams had a clear picture of the lives of average Americans.



Parsons' book is clearly written and very well developed. The reader gets a clear view of not only the candidates and the issues, but also the deep flavor of the campaign. This work is a "must-read" for anybody interested in this pivotal period of American history.

Robert W. Merry, *A Country of Vast Designs: James K. Polk, the Mexican War, and the Conquest of the American Continent*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010.

James K. Polk (1795-1849) was a very private man, but when to his surprise he was nominated and then elected the eleventh President of the United States in 1844, he huddled with his close friend, historian and Navy Secretary George Bancroft. Polk told his friend that he had four concrete goals during the next four years: He planned to settle the Oregon question with Great Britain, thus extending the United States to the Pacific Ocean. He would acquire California from Mexico, thus greatly extending the country's Pacific coast line. He also planned to reduce the Tariff of 1842 and replace its overt protectionism with a pure revenue rationale. Finally, he would create an independent treasury to better protect federal monies and ensure currency stability.

Few presidents accomplish their main goals, but Polk had a clear vision of what he wanted and was willing to take bold and audacious steps to achieve his aims. His tariff and treasury plans were standard doctrines of his Democratic Party, but his foreign policy goals were breathtaking. He was willing to risk two simultaneous wars against Great Britain and Mexico to achieve his goals. He was, in the words of Robert W. Merry, in "many ways a smaller than life figure, but he harbored larger than life ambitions. This dual reality was to shape his presidency, bringing forth both his success and the high price he would pay for his success."

Merry's work, *A Country of Vast Designs*, chronicles Polk's life as a young Tennessee politician and protégé of Andrew Jackson (his supporters often referred to him as "Young Hickory"), Congressman, Speaker of the House, and young governor of his state. Polk, however, lost his bids for reelection as governor in 1841 and 1843. By early 1844 the public regarded him as the proverbial "has-been," a washed up politician. But Polk had deep faith in himself—making a bold bid to be Martin Van Buren's Vice-Presidential candidate in the 1844 presidential election. Van Buren



was the favorite for the Democratic nomination that year, but he had his share of enemies and made a major blunder when he announced his opposition to the annexation of Texas. When the Democratic convention in Baltimore became hopelessly deadlocked between Van Buren and Senator Lewis Cass of Michigan, many delegates broke the logjam by entering Polk into the fray. Polk's main opponent was Whig Henry Clay, who also opposed the annexation of Texas. With the strong backing of Andrew Jackson, Polk won a narrow victory.

Polk as president was an expansionist and his policies reflected the electorate's passionate desire to push their nation's destiny westward. Polk took gambles and maneuvered the United States into a war against the hapless Mexican republic which was in no condition to hold on to its virtually empty territories of California and New Mexico. Polk also played a daring game of expansionist poker against the British to secure the Oregon territory while London took what is now British Columbia. By the end of his presidency Polk had transformed the United States into a transcontinental nation which in future years would utilize these new territories to enhance both its power and wealth.

The strain of the presidency quite literally wore Polk out. When he died only four months after leaving office in early 1849, he was quickly forgotten as the nation now focused on the crisis between North and South. But Merry, a former president and editor of *Congressional Quarterly, Inc.*, brings the reader back to the tumultuous years of the 1840s and gives us a fascinating and very detailed analysis of the struggle for political power among two national parties and several power-hungry politicians like Webster, Calhoun, Clay, and Buchanan. Merry's book is meticulously researched and beautifully written—one of the modern classics of nineteenth-century American historiography.

David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Henry Clay: The Essential American*. New York: Random House, 2010. 595 pp.

During the early decades of the American republic, many journalists complained that Congress was at best petty, partisan, ineffective and very unpopular. At the start of the twenty-first century, these feelings persist. Bipartisanship has vanished as the Republican Party has become the "Party of No" by opposing virtually every piece of legislation offered by the Obama administration. The Democrats in



turn have failed in every effort to work in harmony with the GOP. The result is an ugly stalemate that prevents the government from working effectively at the height of the worst recession since the Great Depression. What we so desperately need are Congressional leaders who can build effective coalitions and engineer compromises so that necessary legislation can get through.

Henry Clay (1777-1852), often called the greatest Senator in American history, gained fame and acclamation because he was more successful in getting Congress to work proficiently for the good of the country. David and Jeanne Heidler, both respected scholars of American history, begin their lengthy biography of Clay by describing in detail the magnitude of national mourning that occurred upon his death. He was the first person to ever lie in state in the U.S. Capitol and his funeral train made a long national tour before returning his body to Lexington Kentucky for burial. He was by far the most highly respected American leader of his generation.

Clay was born in Hanover County, Virginia, and spent his entire youth as a Virginian. He became a lawyer in Virginia and kept strong roots there throughout his life even though he followed his mother and stepfather to Kentucky in his early twenties. Clay always had a strong popular following in the Old Dominion, especially, the authors note, in the small city of Staunton.

Clay was a talented lawyer and ambitious politician. Soon after moving to Kentucky he won a seat in the state legislature where he impressed so many of his peers that they elected him to the U.S. Senate on an interim appointment at age twenty-nine (he took his seat even though he was not yet thirty as required by the Constitution. After he was again appointed to fill an unexpired term in the Senate, he was elected repeatedly to the U.S. House, where he transformed the speakership into a powerful position, and then to the Senate. He became famous as a brilliant orator—it is said that people would travel hundreds of miles just to hear his rich baritone voice. His success as a Congressional leader came early.

Socially and politically ambitious, Clay married Lucretia Hart, daughter of one of Lexington's wealthiest men. The authors indicate that she was a plain woman who was painfully shy. Unlike her husband, who loved life in the public eye, she hated celebrity and the busy social life of Washington DC. Nevertheless, their marriage lasted



fifty-three years and produced eleven children — six daughters, all of whom died before age twenty-nine, and five sons. The many deaths of his children, some of whom had entered adulthood, shattered Clay, but he was survived by many grandchildren who brought much merriment to Clay's Lexington estate.

Clay was influential because of his great ability to get things done by forging political compromises and alliances where he was able to persuade each side to give and take. He stage-managed three major crises in 1820, 1833, and 1850 when differences over slavery and taxes threatened to split the nation. For example, when in 1832-33 South Carolina offered up the policy of nullification to protest what for the South was a highly unfavorable tariff and President Jackson demanded a bill that would allow him to use force to suppress the South Carolinians, Senator Clay negotiated a reduced tariff that helped to bring the crisis to an end.

Clay also had an agenda for the nation. He favored a strong national government that would presumably guide the nation to greater growth and prosperity and he supported for a national bank and federal investment in infrastructure, such as roads and ports. He believed in taxing imported goods to help build American industry. These policies drew strong opposition from many politicians like Andrew Jackson who argued in favor of a smaller, less active federal government and greater respect for states' rights. Clay's views, his "American System," were often out of sync with the feelings of most Americans of his time. Thus, although he sought the presidency five times and only came close in the election of 1844, his dream of becoming President was never met.

Another problem was Clay's stance on slavery. He claimed to dislike slavery, yet he owned slaves. He favored gradual emancipation and led the effort to resettle freed slaves in Africa. But he was willing to continue slavery if it would preserve what he considered most important: the union. The result was a wishy-washy stance that earned the distrust of many in the South and of the abolitionists in the North.

Despite his failings, Clay's career served as a very clear example of how politicians can and should on occasion put aside ideology and political gamesmanship for the good of the country. This well-written and very deeply researched biography will make the reader wish that a few modern Henry Clays would get elected to Congress today.



Joel H. Silbey, *Party over Section: The Rough and Ready Presidential Election of 1848*. Lawrence Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2009. 205 pp.

Presidential elections are always significant events in the United States as they are often a good barometer of the national mood. Some elections signal direct change or a national crisis as was the case in both 1860 and 1932. Other elections show small but seismic shifts in popular attitudes. The election of 1848 between Mexican War hero and Whig Zachary Taylor and Democrat Lewis Cass, veteran Governor and later Senator from Michigan was such an occurrence. The development of a new force, the Free Soil Party, the first significant party to take an active stand against the spread of slavery to newly gained American territories, was a harbinger of the emergence of the Republican Party in the early mid 1850s and the 1860 election which saw the victory of Lincoln and the start of the Civil War.

Joel H. Silbey, emeritus professor of history at Cornell University, has produced a fascinating, comprehensive, and well-written study of the 1848 election. Two well-organized political parties, the Democrats and the Whigs, had dominated the political scene throughout the 1840s. The Whig ticket of Harrison and Tyler had won in 1840, but the Democrats led by James Polk very narrowly defeated Whig candidate Henry Clay in 1844. 1848 emerged as another close election between the Whigs, who supported higher tariffs to protect American industries and federal sponsorship of internal improvements, and the Democrats, who opposed higher tariffs and federal involvement in expanding domestic infrastructure.

While both parties were entrenched throughout the North and South, they desperately sought to avoid taking a clear stand on one of the most difficult issues of the day — the South's desire to expand slavery to the new territories acquired by the United States in the Mexican War which had just come to an end. The country was then evenly divided between slave and non-slave states (fifteen of each), but expansion or non-expansion of slavery threatened to upset this balance. Both parties knew that if they took a stand against expansion to appease northern voters, they would risk losing support in the South.

The failure of both parties to address the question of slavery led some enraged northerners to form a new entity, the Free Soil Party



(FSP). Meeting in the summer of 1848 after the two major parties had selected their candidates, they nominated former Vice-President and President Martin Van Buren (1782-1862) for President and famous abolitionist Francis Adams for Vice-President. The FSP campaigned vigorously throughout the North, but in the election garnered only ten percent of the vote, much of it in New York, and no electoral votes. Taylor won a narrow victory over Cass.

Silbey asserts that the FSP had no real effect on the outcome of the election in that it attracted votes from both parties. Most party stalwarts, including Whig Abraham Lincoln, stayed with their parties. Silbey concludes his book by noting:

When the explosion [that led to the Civil War and the formation of the Republican Party] did occur between 1854 and 1856 because of several converging factors, beginning with an anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant uproar against the two major parties but ultimately dominated by an even more angry confrontation over slavery's expansion – this time into the area long denied to slavery by the Missouri Compromise – the previous experience of intermittent sectional uproars and behavior now hardened into something more durable. Both of the old parties were seriously weakened by the powerful voter upsurge against them in the mid-1850s, one that did not retreat from its initial surge but led to an electoral realignment of wide reach and major consequence — something that had not occurred in 1848. Voters abandoned their long-standing party moorings in search of a more compatible political home. As a result, political conditions in the United States changed significantly. The Whigs collapsed as a significant force on the national scene and the Republican Party established itself as the voice of those opposed to the further extension of slavery....As a result of this voter relocation and resettlement, the Free Soil Party of 1848 could now be seen as the 'harbinger' of its successor [Republican] coalition.

Michael F. Holt, *Franklin Pierce: The Genial but Troubled New Englander Whose Single-Minded Partisan Loyalties Inflamed the Nation's Simmering Battle over Slavery*. New York: Times Books, 2010. 154 pp.

Michael F. Holt, distinguished Professor of American History at the University of Virginia, has produced a brilliant study of the tragic and flawed presidency of Franklin Pierce (1853-1857) as part of a worthy series of books on the American presidency. Holt admits that Pierce's presidency did nothing to slow the growing divide separating North and South and that the major problem was Pierce's own



obsessive desire to unify his own Democratic Party that in fact enhanced its disintegration and permitted a new sectional political coalition, the Republicans, to win the 1860 election.

I have visited Pierce's homestead in Hillsborough New Hampshire. It is the home of a relatively wealthy and successful lawyer turned politician. Every effort is made in a video presentation to glorify Pierce's political career and presidency, but the facts are very different. Pierce was an intelligent and very handsome young man from Hillsborough, the son on a Revolutionary War hero, who parted his way through two years at Bowdoin College in Maine before suddenly reversing his course and graduating with honors. It was at Bowdoin that he made lifelong friendships with such distinguished figures as Nathaniel Hawthorne and developed a liking for alcohol, a habit that eventually destroyed his liver and killed him in 1869.

New Hampshire was a doggedly Democratic state in the early decades of the 19th century and Pierce rose rapidly in state politics to several terms in the State Legislature in his early 20s, to election to the national House of Representatives and after 4 terms there, to the U.S. Senate at the age of 32. He made critical friends and allies in the Senate which he kept after his resignation near the end of his term in 1842. Pierce had strong ties with several Southern politicians and was very outspoken in his support for the preservation of the Union and his hatred for the growing Abolitionist movement.

Pierce remained the chief figure in New Hampshire politics between 1842 and 1852 and developed a national figure known for his strong support for the Union. When none of the leading candidates (including James Buchanan and Stephen Douglas) at the 1852 Democratic convention could muster enough delegate support to secure the nomination, Pierce, a true dark horse, became the party's choice. Because the increasingly impotent Whig Party offered little opposition, Pierce won in a landslide that also gave the Democrats firm control of Congress.

Pierce, however, knew full well that when one party comes to dominate national politics and there is no meaningful opposition party, the dominant party often disintegrates into competing factions. Bemoaning the fact that there was no strong opposition to force the Democrats to unify themselves, Pierce picked a cabinet that had representatives from both the deep South (like Jefferson Davis) and Free



Soilers from the North. This desperate effort to unify the party meant that his administration had no clear-cut policies or direction. There was no clear sense of mission or direction and the party soon turned to bickering and division.

Pierce's own actions, however, deeply angered many of his supporters in the North. His efforts to buy Cuba from Spain and allow it to enter the Union infuriated many antislavery northerners. The President's strong support for the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which repealed the 1820 Missouri Compromise and opened the door to possible expansion of slavery in the West, led to greater turmoil. The crisis grew in the mid-1850s when violence broke out and "Bleeding Kansas" enraged partisans in both North and South and led to the creation of the sectional Republican Party.

Pierce sought re-election in 1856, but his divisive presidency, despite strong support from many Southern delegates at the Democratic convention, led to his defeat at the hands of James Buchanan. Pierce left the presidency and spent the next few years caring for his wife Jane, who has stricken with tuberculosis. They traveled across Europe and to the Bahamas, but in several years Jane was dead. His kind nature led Pierce to join in the care of Nathaniel Hawthorne, who by 1864 was stricken with cancer. The already famous author traveled with Pierce up to the mountains of northern New Hampshire where Hawthorne died. Now depressed and alone, Pierce returned to central New Hampshire where he made a half-hearted attempt to renew himself by farming, but sadly let the power of alcohol destroy his liver.

Holt has written a clear analytical history of both Pierce and his era. I have read most of the books in this presidential series and am convinced that Holt's book is the best of the lot.



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